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CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE
OF THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

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CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE
OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

VOL. I.

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CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND AUSTRALIA

CONSISTING OF EXTRACTS ON DOCTRINE,
PRACTICE, AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT
FROM THE EPISTLES AND OTHER DOCU-
MENTS ISSUED UNDER THE SANCTION OF
LONDON YEARLY MEETING, 1672 TO 1906

IN TWO VOLS.

VOL. I.—DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

Approved and adopted by the Yearly Meeting of 1883

See edition of 1911

LONDON: HEADLEY BROTHERS,
14 BISHOPSGATE WITHOUT 1906

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FROM THE
YEARLY MEETING'S EPISTLE, 1883.

The revision of our Book of Discipline, which embodies declarations and regulations issued under the sanction of this Meeting at various times during a period of upwards of two centuries, as regards the Doctrine, Practice, and Church Government of our religious Society, has claimed our close attention. We have, with gratitude, to acknowledge the help mercifully afforded throughout these deliberations, which have tended yet more closely to unite us in the precious bond of the Saviour's love and peace. We have been afresh impressed with the value and importance of our Christian profession, and of our general system of Church Government under the Headship of Christ; and we take this opportunity of commending them to the loyal attachment of our various members.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

	PAGE
PREFACE	xi
NOTICE TO THE READER	xv

PART I.—CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

FROM AN EPISTLE ADDRESSED BY GEORGE FOX AND OTHERS TO THE GOVERNOR OF BARBADOES, 1671	3
FROM A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE GIVEN FORTH ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY, 1693	6
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1736	10
DECLARATORY MINUTE OF THE YEARLY MEETING, 1829	10
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1836	13
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1852	14
FROM THE JOURNAL OF GEORGE FOX, UNDER DATE 1645	15
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1868, 1881	16
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1854, 1881	17
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1858	17
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1879	18
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1857	19
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1868, 1861, 1880	20

	PAGE
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1866	21
FROM AN ADDRESS ISSUED BY THE YEARLY MEETING, 1841, ENTITLED "A TESTIMONY TO THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH"	22
FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1835, 1880	23
CONCLUDING SUMMARY AND EXHORTATION, FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1871, 1876, 1861	26

PART II.—CHRISTIAN PRACTICE.

CHAP.		
I.	MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP	31
II.	PRIVATE RETIREMENT AND PRAYER	42
III.	ON READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES	47
IV.	ON GIFTS AND STEWARDSHIPS IN THE CHURCH :—	
	<i>Section</i> 1. The Ministry of the Gospel	53
	,, 2. General Advice on Faithfulness in our several Stewardships for the benefit of others	59
	,, 3. Extracts from the Epistles of George Fox on the Importance of Faithfulness	64
V.	LOVE AND UNITY :—	
	<i>Section</i> 1. Love one towards another	67
	,, 2. Love and Unity in the Church	72
VI.	COUNSEL AS TO MARRIAGE	75
VII.	COUNSEL TO PARENTS AND HEADS OF FAMILIES	80
VIII.	COUNSEL TO THE YOUNG	90
IX.	CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ITS VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS :—	
	<i>Section</i> 1. Walk with God	97
	,, 2. Privileges of the First Day of the Week	102

CONTENTS.

ix

CHAP.		PAGE
	<i>Section 3. Christian Self-denial in its relation to—</i>	
	(1) Simplicity and Moderation	104
	(2) The Use of Intoxicating Beverages	107
	(3) Amusements and Recreations	110
	(4) Books and Reading	115
„	4. Uprightness and Integrity—	
	(1) Business and Trade	117
	(2) Frequent Inspection of Affairs and Early Disclosure of Pecuniary Difficulties	122
	(3) Counsel to Insolvents	123
	(4) Advice as to Wills	124
„	5. On Liberality and Benevolence, and against Covetousness	125
„	6. Counsel to Employers	130
„	7. Christian Life in its Relation to Civil Govern- ment	132
„	8. Advice to Emigrants	135
 X. CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY :—		
	<i>Section 1. Ecclesiastical Assumption</i>	137
„	2. Liberty of Conscience	143
„	3. National Fasts and Rejoicings	146
„	4. On Oaths	148
„	5. On War	153
„	6. Slavery and the Slave Trade	159
„	7. Burials and Mourning Habits	164
INDEX		167

PREFACE.

To bear witness by practice, as well as by profession, to righteousness and true holiness, as necessary fruits of faith in our Lord and Saviour, is one of the great duties of the Christian Church. This important truth, our religious Society has, from an early period of its history, earnestly endeavoured to uphold; evidence of which will be found in the ensuing pages, consisting of statements of Christian doctrine and counsel, as well as of regulations for the maintenance of good order, adopted from time to time by the Yearly Meeting, as the representative body of the Society.

From the year 1672, down to 1781, the Minutes of the Yearly Meeting, in relation to these subjects, were preserved and circulated in manuscript—each Monthly or Quarterly Meeting being expected to make provision for the supply of copies for the use of its own members. In the year 1781, the Meeting for Sufferings, by direction of the Yearly Meeting, prepared a digest of the regulations and advices issued up to that period. This was afterwards carefully revised, and “compared with the original records,” by a large committee appointed by the Yearly Meeting to unite with the Meeting for Sufferings in the service; and, having been submitted to the Yearly Meeting of 1782, and approved by that Meeting,

was published in 1783, under the title of "Extracts from the Minutes and Advices of the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London from its first institution."

This volume had been in circulation about eighteen years, when the Yearly Meeting recommended the Quarterly Meetings to send representatives to London to join the Meeting for Sufferings in revising the whole, and preparing a new edition. In proceeding with this work, "it was found expedient to omit several advices which stood in the First Edition; chiefly because there were others under the same head of equal or superior pertinency, or because, in a few instances, it seemed eligible to exchange them for others issued since the printing of the Book of Extracts; and there was a considerable abridgment of some of those which remained." Some change was also made in the general arrangement of the contents. The volume, thus revised, was adopted by the Yearly Meeting of 1801, and published in 1802.

A Third and enlarged Edition, after undergoing a similar course of revision, was issued, by direction of the Yearly Meeting, in the year 1834, under the title of "Rules of Discipline of the Religious Society of Friends, with Advices, being Extracts from the Minutes and Epistles of their Yearly Meeting held in London, from its first institution." A Supplement to this volume appeared in 1849.

In 1860, another edition appeared necessary, the preparation of which was, as on previous occasions, referred by the Yearly Meeting of that year to the Meeting for Sufferings, in conjunction with representatives from the several Quarterly or General Meetings. The results of the care and patient

attention bestowed upon this important service were presented to the Yearly Meeting of 1862, and, with a few alterations, were agreed to, and formed the Fourth Edition.

Twenty-two years having elapsed since the Fourth Edition of this work was issued, during which changes had been made in some of our disciplinary arrangements, and various advices had been issued from time to time by the Yearly Meeting on important subjects, it was concluded in 1882 to issue a new edition. The care of preparing this was entrusted to a Conference consisting of a certain number of Friends, some appointed by the Meeting for Sufferings, and others by the several Quarterly Meetings throughout the Yearly Meeting.

The result of their deliberations having been submitted to the Yearly Meeting, the whole, with such modifications as have been thought advisable, is now presented, as embodying the Christian Doctrine, Practice, and arrangements as to Church Government of our religious Society.

As on each of the former occasions, omissions have been made, and new matter has been added. The threefold division of the Book adopted in the last edition has been adhered to; but some modifications, for the sake of greater clearness, have been made in the division and arrangement of the chapters and subordinate headings.

The variety and excellence of the matter thus offered to the reader invite an attentive and serious perusal. There will be found instruction for the inexperienced, as well as that which may confirm the faith of the more advanced Christian.

- The inquirer after truth may here see that the maintenance of Christian discipline is altogether compatible with the just claims of Christian liberty; and that, without the intervention of a human priesthood, and without any provision either for the appointment or for the payment of a stated ministry, the regular performance of public worship and the free exercise of spiritual gifts may be secured in a manner which long experience has proved to be in harmony with the apostolic injunction, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

To the members of our own Society we commend the ensuing pages, in the earnest desire that the blessing of the Lord may rest upon their publication. May it ever be borne in mind that rules, however wisely devised or carefully digested, if acted on with a mere rigid adherence to the letter, will tend only to formalism. It is a marked feature of this volume, that, whilst exhibiting the *form* of our discipline, it bears abundant testimony to the *spirit* in which it should be conducted—to that wisdom, patience, forbearance, and love, which ought ever to prevail in the hearts of those engaged in its administration.

1883.

NOTICE TO THE READER.

IN this compilation are included documents of various dates. The figures appended to the extracts indicate the respective years in which they were issued. Where two or more dates are appended to one paragraph, it is intended to show either that some change has been made in the original at the time of the second or other later date, or that two or more paragraphs, issued at different times, have been combined. The letters P.E. added to the date denote that the paragraph was taken from a printed epistle of the Yearly Meeting; whilst all paragraphs to which these letters are not affixed were taken either from special addresses, or from minutes issued by that Meeting.

PART I.
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Two centuries have passed away since this Yearly Meeting first assembled in London as a representative meeting of our religious Society. Year by year, in the goodness of our Heavenly Father, it has been held from that period in unbroken succession. The names of Fox, Penn, Barclay, Dewsbury, and Whitehead, of Thomas Story, the Fothergills, and Woolman—to mention no others—appear in its proceedings; besides those of many, beloved and honoured, at a later day, with whom it has been our privilege to worship and to labour. “The memory of the just is blessed,” but their most precious memorial is their united testimony to Jesus. He is, from age to age, the rest and the sanctuary of the people of God. Beloved Friends, the Christian’s is a high and heavenly calling, and great are his responsibilities. The Gospel, with its hallowed restraints, privileges and consolations, is applicable alike to every class and position. May all “watch unto prayer,” and seek with holy consistency, in their varied duties and circumstances, to walk worthy of such a vocation. Let it be our joy to know our interest and our abiding to be in Christ. 1879. P. E.

“All of you” (in the words of George Fox’s last epistle, written three days before his death) “live and walk in Christ Jesus; so that nothing may be between you and God but Christ, in whom ye have salvation, life, rest and peace with God.”

PART I.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

FROM AN EPISTLE ADDRESSED BY GEORGE FOX AND OTHERS
TO THE GOVERNOR OF BARBADOES, 1671.

(From the First Edition of George Fox's Journal, published in 1694,
pp. 358-60.)

WE do own and believe in God, the only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, who is the Creator of all things both in heaven and in the earth, and the Preserver of all that He hath made; who is God over all, blessed for ever; to whom be all honour and glory, dominion, praise and thanksgiving, both now and for evermore! And we do own and believe in Jesus Christ his beloved and only begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature, by whom were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him. And we do own and believe that He was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; and that He was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of

Jerusalem; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day by the power of his Father, for our justification: and we do believe that He ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God. This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we do believe that there is no other foundation to be laid but that which is laid, even Christ Jesus; who, we believe, tasted death for every man, and shed his blood for all men, and is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world: according as John the Baptist testified of Him, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world" (John i. 29). We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, even the Captain of our salvation (who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works); who is the Seed of the woman that bruises the serpent's head, to wit, Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. That He is (as the Scriptures of truth say of Him) our wisdom and righteousness, justification and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be saved. It is He alone who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls: He it is who is our Prophet, whom Moses long since testified of, saying, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you: and it shall come to pass, that every soul that will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts iii. 22, 23). He it is that is now come, "and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true." And He rules in our hearts by his law of love and of life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. And we have no life but by Him; for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by whose blood we

are cleansed, and our consciences sprinkled from dead works to serve the living God. And He is our Mediator, that makes peace and reconciliation between God offended and us offending; He being the Oath of God, the new Covenant of light, life, grace, and peace, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Now this Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly man, the Emmanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in; Him whom the high-priest raged against, and said He had spoken blasphemy; whom the priests and the elders of the Jews took counsel together against, and put to death; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason, who also gave large money to the soldiers to broach an horrible lie—namely, that his disciples came and stole Him away by night whilst they slept. And after He was risen from the dead, the history of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus for preaching Christ and his resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ, whom we own to be our life and salvation.

And as concerning the Holy Scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, through the holy men of God, who (as the Scripture itself declares, 2 Peter i. 21) “spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” We believe they are to be read, believed, and fulfilled (he that fulfils them is Christ); and they are “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17); and are able to make wise “unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.” We call the Holy Scriptures—as Christ and the apostles called them, and holy men of God called them—the words of God.

We do declare, that we do esteem it a duty incumbent on us to pray with and for, to teach, instruct and admonish, those in and belonging to our families; this being a

command of the Lord, the disobedience whereunto will provoke the Lord's displeasure. Now Negroes and Indians make up a very great part of the families in this island, for whom an account will be required by Him who comes to judge both quick and dead, at the great day of judgment, when every one shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil,—at that day, I say, of the resurrection both of the good and of the bad, of the just and the unjust, “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day.” (2 Thess. i. 7—10. See also 2 Peter iii. 3, etc.)

FROM A DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE GIVEN FORTH
ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY, 1693.

We sincerely profess faith in God by his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as being our Light and Life, our only way to the Father, and also our only Mediator and Advocate with the Father.

That God created all things. He made the worlds by his Son Jesus Christ, He being that powerful and living Word of God, by whom all things were made. And that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit are one, in divine being inseparable; one true, living, and eternal God, blessed for ever.

That this Word, or Son of God, in the fulness of time, became perfect man according to the flesh, descended and came of the seed of Abraham and David; but was miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; and declared powerfully to be the Son of God,

according to the spirit of sanctification, by the resurrection from the dead.

That in the Word (or Son of God) was life, and the same life was the light of men ; and that He was that true light which enlightens every man coming into the world ; and therefore that men are to believe in the light, that they may become the children of the light.

That as man, Christ died for our sins, rose again, and was received up into glory in the heavens. He having been, in his dying for all, that one great universal offering and sacrifice for peace, atonement, and reconciliation between God and man ; and He is the propitiation not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

That Jesus Christ, who sitteth at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, is yet our King, High Priest, and Prophet in his Church, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man. He is the Intercessor and Advocate with the Father in heaven, there appearing in the presence of God for us, being touched with the feeling of our infirmities, sufferings, and sorrows. And also by his Spirit in our hearts, He maketh intercession according to the will of God, crying, Abba, Father.

That the Gospel of the grace of God should be preached in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, being one in power, wisdom, and goodness ; and indivisible (or not to be divided) in the great work of man's salvation.

We sincerely confess and believe in Jesus Christ, both as He is true God and perfect man, and that He is the author of our living faith in the power and goodness of God, as manifested in his Son Jesus Christ, and by his own blessed Spirit (or divine unction) revealed in us, whereby we inwardly feel and taste of his goodness, life, and virtue ; so as our souls live and prosper by and in Him : and the inward sense

of this divine power of Christ, and faith in the same, and the inward experience, are absolutely necessary to make a true, sincere and perfect Christian in spirit and life.

That divine honour and worship are due to the Son of God ; and that He is, in true faith, to be prayed unto, and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ called upon (as the primitive Christians did), because of the glorious union or oneness of the Father and the Son, and that we cannot acceptably offer up prayers and praises to God, nor receive a gracious answer or blessing from God, but in and through his dear Son.

That Christ's body that was crucified was not the Godhead, yet by the power of God was raised from the dead ; and that the same Christ that was therein crucified, ascended into heaven and glory, is not questioned by us. His flesh saw no corruption, it did not corrupt ; but yet doubtless his body was changed into a more glorious and heavenly condition than it was in, when subject to divers sufferings on earth ; but how and what manner of change it met withal after it was raised from the dead, so as to become such a glorious body as it is declared to be, is too wonderful for mortals to conceive. The Scripture is silent as to the manner thereof, and we are not curious to inquire about or to dispute it ; nor do we esteem it necessary to make ourselves wise above what is written, as to the manner or condition of Christ's glorious body in heaven ; no more than to inquire how Christ appeared in divers manners or forms ; or how He came in among his disciples, the doors being shut ; or how He vanished out of their sight, after He was risen.

Concerning the resurrection of the dead, and the great day of judgment yet to come, beyond the grave, or after death, and Christ's coming without us, to judge the quick and the dead ; what the Holy Scriptures plainly declare and testify in these matters, we have been always ready to embrace.

1. We sincerely believe not only a resurrection in Christ from the fallen sinful state here, but a rising and ascending

into glory with Him hereafter; that when He at last appears, we may appear with Him in glory. (Col. iii. 4; 1 John iii. 2.) But that all the wicked who live in rebellion against the light of grace, and die finally impenitent, shall come forth to the resurrection of condemnation. And that the soul or spirit of every man and woman shall be reserved in its own distinct and proper being, and every seed (yea, every soul) shall have its proper body, as God is pleased to give it. (1 Cor. xv.) A natural body is sown, a spiritual body is raised; that being first which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. And though it is said, "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality;" the change shall be such as [will accord with the declaration] "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. xv. 50). We shall be raised out of all corruption and corruptibility, out of all mortality; and the children of God and of the resurrection shall be equal to the angels of God in heaven. As the celestial bodies do far excel terrestrial, so we expect our spiritual bodies in the resurrection shall far excel what our bodies now are. Howbeit we esteem it very unnecessary to dispute or question how the dead are raised, or with what body they come; but rather submit that to the wisdom and pleasure of Almighty God.

2. For the doctrine of eternal judgment, God hath committed all judgment unto his Son Jesus Christ; and He is Judge both of quick and dead, and of the states and ends of all mankind. (John v. 22, 27; Acts x. 42; 2 Tim. iv. 1; 1 Peter iv. 5.)

That there shall be hereafter a great harvest, which is the end of the world, a great day of judgment, the Holy Scripture is clear. (Matt. x. 15, xiii. 39—41; Jude 6.) "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his

glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations," etc. (Matt. xxv. 31, 32 to the end; compared with Luke ix. 26 and 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16, and 2 Thess. i. 7, 8 to the end; Rev. xx. 12—15.)

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1736.

In order that, as we have received Christ, so we may walk in Him in all holiness and godliness of conversation, we earnestly exhort that ye hold fast the profession of the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ without wavering; both in respect to his outward coming in the flesh, his sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, mediation and intercession at the right hand of the Father; and to the inward manifestation of his grace and Holy Spirit in our hearts, powerfully working in the soul of man to the subduing of every evil affection and lust, and to the purifying of our consciences from dead works to serve the living God; and that through the virtue and efficacy of this most holy faith, ye may become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

DECLARATORY MINUTE OF THE YEARLY MEETING, 1829.

We feel ourselves called upon, at this time, to avow our belief in the inspiration and divine authority of the Old and New Testament.

We further believe that the promise made after the transgression of our first parents, in the consequence of whose fall all the posterity of Adam are involved, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent; and the declaration unto Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," had a direct reference to the coming in the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him also did the prophet Isaiah bear testimony when he declared, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called

Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." And again, the same prophet spoke of Him when he said, "Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; but He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed." The same blessed Redeemer is emphatically denominated by the prophet Jeremiah "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

At that period, and in that miraculous manner, which God in his perfect wisdom saw fit, the promised Messiah appeared personally upon earth, when "He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Having finished the work which was given Him to do, He gave Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God. He tasted death for every man. "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." He passed into the heavens; and being the brightness of the glory of God; "and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" and "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

It is by the Lord Jesus Christ that the world will be judged in righteousness. He is "the mediator of the new covenant;"—"the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." "In

Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily:" and to Him did the Evangelist bear testimony when he said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." He "was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Our blessed Lord Himself spoke of his perpetual dominion and power in his Church, when He said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life;" and when, describing the spiritual food which He bestoweth on the true believers, He declared, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." He spoke also of his saving grace, bestowed on those who come in faith unto Him, when He said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

Our religious Society, from its earliest establishment to the present day, has received these most important doctrines of Holy Scripture in their plain and obvious acceptation; and it is the earnest desire of this Meeting that all who profess our name may so live and so walk before God as that they may know these sacred truths to be blessed to them individually. We desire that, as the mere profession of sound Christian doctrine will not avail to the salvation of the soul, all may attain to a living efficacious faith, which through the power of the Holy Ghost bringeth forth fruit unto holiness; the end whereof is everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1836.

Often as our religious Society has declared its belief in the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, and upheld the sacred volume as the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines of true religion, we believe it right at this time to revive some important declarations of Scripture itself on the subject. It is expressly declared by the apostle Peter, that "the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man : but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The apostle John declares respecting the gospel which he wrote, "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Very pertinent and comprehensive is the language which the apostle Paul addressed to Timothy : "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness : that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Again, the apostle says, " Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Finally, our blessed Lord, in reference to those divine writings of which the grand object, in accordance with his own declaration, was to testify of Himself, emphatically declares " the Scripture cannot be broken."

Although most of these passages relate to the Old Testament, our Society has always freely acknowledged that the principles developed in them are equally applicable to the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. In conformity with these principles it has ever been, and still is, the belief of the Society of Friends, that the Holy Scriptures of the

Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God : that there can be no appeal from them to any other authority whatsoever : that they are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus ; being the appointed means of making known to us the blessed truths of Christianity : that they are the only divinely authorized record of the doctrines which we are bound as Christians to believe, and of the moral principles which are to regulate our actions : that no doctrine which is not contained in them can be required of any one to be believed as an article of faith : that whatsoever any man says or does which is contrary to the Scriptures, though under profession of the immediate guidance of the Spirit, must be reckoned and accounted a mere delusion.

We trust, however, that none of our members will content themselves with merely entertaining a sound view on this subject ; but that they will remember that the Holy Scriptures are given to us that they may be diligently used, and that we may obtain a right understanding of them in the fear of the Lord. Let us never forget that their main purpose is, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, to bring us to our Lord Jesus Christ ; that by a living operative faith in Him, we may obtain reconciliation with the Father, and be made partakers of everlasting life.

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1852.

Wherefore, beloved brethren, let it be the frequent engagement of our souls, in deep reverence and humility, to “consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.” The promised Messiah, He to whom all preceding dispensations had pointed, and in whom they were ended and fulfilled, He who was with God, and was God, the Word who hath declared to man Him that is invisible, even He was made flesh, and dwelt amongst men. Though He was rich,

yet for our sakes He became poor : veiling, in the form of a servant, the brightness of his glory, that, through Him, the kindness and love of God toward man might appear, in a manner every way suited to our wants and finite capacities. His righteous precepts were illustrated and confirmed by his own holy example. He went about doing good ; for us He endured sorrow, hunger, thirst, weariness, pain ; unutterable anguish of body and of soul even unto death ; and was “ in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Thus humbling Himself that we might be exalted, He emphatically recognized the duties and the sufferings of humanity as among the means whereby, through the obedience of faith, we are to be disciplined for heaven ; sanctifying them to us, by Himself performing and enduring them ; and, as “ the Forerunner,” at once plainly marking out and consecrating for his followers the path in which they must tread. But not only in these blessed relations must the Lord Jesus be ever precious to his people. Exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, in Him has been revealed a Redeemer at once able to suffer and almighty to save ; an High Priest, “ touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” who, having made reconciliation for our sins by the offering up of Himself once for all, “ is gone into heaven,” now to appear, our Mediator and Advocate, in the presence of God.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF GEORGE FOX, UNDER DATE 1645.

(First Edition, p. 4.)

Priest Stevens asked me a question—viz., why Christ cried out upon the cross, “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ” and why He said, “ If it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; yet not my will, but thine be done ? ” And I told him : “ At that time the sins of all mankind were upon Him, and their iniquities and transgressions, with which He was wounded ; which He was to bear, and to be an offering for them, as He was man, but

died not as He was God. And so in that He died for all men, and tasted death for every man, He was an offering for the sins of the whole world." This I spake, being at that time in a measure sensible of Christ's sufferings and what He went through.

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1868, 1881.

"The Lord our God is holy"; "his mercy endureth for ever." These great truths were proclaimed under the old covenant. But it is in the glorious Gospel that their harmony is clearly unfolded, and the way revealed whereby fallen man may be made a partaker, through faith, of the righteousness of God.

The Gospel is a message of glad tidings to man as he is, in order that he may become what he is not. It deals, not with speculation, but with fact. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Sin is indeed a fearful reality. It is in its essence a revolt against God. The Gospel is the recognition of the disease, and God's offer to all of the one remedy. "The wrath of God," of which we are so often impressively reminded in the New, as well as in the Old Testament, is, in the light of the Gospel, the active manifestation of his holiness, altogether free from any approach to earthly passion or vindictiveness. The Father's heart still yearns over the lost child. "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

The offering up of Christ as the "propitiation for the sins of the whole world" is the appointed manifestation both of the righteousness and of the love of God. In this propitiation, the pardon of sin involves no relaxation of the law of holiness. He, the unchangeably Just, proclaims Himself "the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." From age to age the sufferings and death of Christ have been a hidden mystery, and a rock of offence to the unbelief and pride of man's

fallen nature; yet to the humble penitent, whose heart is broken under the convicting power of the Spirit, life is revealed in that death. As he looks upon Him who was wounded for our transgressions, and upon whom the Lord was pleased to lay the iniquity of us all, his eye is more and more opened to see, and his heart to understand, the awfulness of sin, for which the Saviour died; whilst, in the sense of pardoning grace, he may "joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1854, 1881.

It is they only who are washed, who are sanctified, who are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God, who can enjoy the unspeakable privilege of membership in the Lord's spiritual Israel. No rite, no outward membership in any church, can suffice to make us children of Abraham. Without conversion they who have but a birthright amongst us may, notwithstanding all their advantages of training and education, grow old, still inquiring, like Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" To every member of each successive generation the answer of the Lord is alike applicable, "Ye must be born again." Without this essential change none can see the kingdom of God. Let none, therefore, allow themselves to be deceived. The words of our Lord and Master cannot be reversed, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1858.

He who loved his Church, and gave Himself for it, yet lives and reigns and intercedes on its behalf. To Him John was commissioned to bear testimony, not only as the Lamb appointed for the sacrifice, but also in his exaltation and glory, as the Dispenser of the promised Spirit. The voice

in the wilderness that proclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," declared also, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." "It hath pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." He is the anointed Priest and King; and all who, through living faith, become Christians indeed, receive an unction of the Spirit from Him, the Holy One. This is "the promise of the Father" under the new covenant; the seal of reconciliation to the humble believer in Jesus; the earnest and the foretaste of that full communion and perfect joy which are reserved for them that endure unto the end.

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1879.

The Lord Jesus died not for a favoured few only, but for all. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." His Church must ever testify to the unsearchable riches of his grace. The invitation is all-embracing. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Firmly as we believe this truth, we think it right once more plainly to declare that we have never acknowledged any principle of spiritual light, life or holiness, inherent by nature in the mind or heart of man. We confess, with the apostle, that "we are by nature the children of wrath, even as others." It was under a deep impression of this great truth that George Fox writes,* "All are concluded under sin and shut up in unbelief, as I had been, that Jesus Christ might have the pre-eminence; who enlightens, and gives grace, and faith and power." The light that shines into man's heart is not of man, and must ever be distinguished both from the conscience which it enlightens, and from the natural faculty of reason which, when unsubjected to its holy influences, is, in the things of God, very foolishness. As the eye is to the body, so is conscience

* George Fox's Journal, p. 8, ed. 1694.

to our inner nature, the organ by which we see; and as both light and life are essential to sight in the natural eye, so conscience, as the inward eye, cannot see aright without the quickening and illumination of the Spirit of God. It is the capacity to receive this blessed influence which, in an especial manner, gives man pre-eminence above the beasts that perish; which distinguishes him, in every nation and in every clime, as an object of the redeeming love of God, as a being not only intelligent, but responsible; for whom the message of salvation through our crucified Redeemer is, under all possible circumstances, designed to be a "joyful sound."

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1857.

It is a distinguishing feature of the work of the Holy Spirit, that it bears an effectual witness to Christ, and brings to the enjoyment of his grace in those various relations in which He has been pleased to reveal Himself. Under the power of heart-searching conviction, it draws the believing soul, in contrition and humiliation, to the Saviour's feet. Here, in the acceptance of Him, in living faith, as the propitiation for sin, the reconciling love of God is shed abroad in the heart, and we are enabled to realize the inestimable privilege of access unto God; not in our own right, or for any works of righteousness that we have done, but for the sake of Christ alone. In thus witnessing of Christ, and establishing the soul upon Him, the Holy Spirit becomes a Comforter indeed. Through his sanctifying power, the righteousness of God through faith is more and more manifested in the life and conversation, whilst all boasting is excluded. The promise of the New Covenant, in its most precious import, is fulfilled. The law of God becomes more and more plainly written upon the heart, whilst a yet clearer and clearer view is granted of the depth of that love which, in Christ Jesus, pardoneth iniquity, transgression and sin. Fervently do we desire that our dear Friends, every-

where, may press after an individual acquaintance with this heart-searching and heart-sanctifying knowledge of the Son of God. May none who are under the heavy weight of conviction, stop short in that first stage of Christian experience; but, yielding without reserve to the further manifestations of light and truth, may they be brought, from step to step, in faith and faithfulness, to the full enjoyment in their own souls of the covenant of life and peace.

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1868, 1861, 1830.

As a Christian Church, we accept the immediate operations of the Spirit of God upon the heart, in their inseparable connection with our risen and exalted Saviour. We disavow all professed spirituality that is divorced from faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, crucified for us without the gates of Jerusalem. One with the Father and with the Son, the Holy Spirit works for the regeneration of fallen and rebellious man. Not merely as the Enlightener of the conscience, and the Reprover for sin, is the Spirit mercifully granted, but also, in an especial manner, to testify of and to glorify the Saviour; to apply, with sanctifying efficacy to the soul, his words and work when upon earth, and his mediation and intercession for us in heaven. Hidden and very gradual as may often be the work of the Spirit, it produces a real and most effectual change; and as obedience keeps pace with knowledge, the believer is privileged to receive more and more of the fulness which is in Christ. But let him never forget that every increase of light and experience, how much soever connected with his usefulness to others, is also for the furtherance of the work in his own soul. He is taught by the Spirit to look unto Jesus; that, "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," he may be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." To be guided by the Spirit is the practical application of the Christian religion.

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLE, 1866.

The Worship of God under the Gospel consists not in ceremonies or in external observances. It is a simple *spiritual* service. That which was represented in the sacrifices of the law was fulfilled and ended in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the exercise of faith in Him the reality is now to be enjoyed. "He is the propitiation for our sins," the High Priest who hath passed into the heavens, now to appear our Mediator and Advocate in the presence of God. We cannot doubt that the outward observances ordained under the former dispensation were, through faith, blessed to the children of God; but even then the testimony of the Spirit, from generation to generation, pointed with ever-increasing clearness to the eternal Substance; even then, one prophet after another was called to proclaim the truth embodied in the words, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." The spiritually enlightened Christian cannot but mark, with solemn sadness, the fact that whilst the Divine course of discipline and progress, through the law and the prophets, was from the type to the Antitype, from the ritual to the spiritual, from the form to the Substance, from man to Christ; the downward tendencies of the professing Church through so many successive ages, renewed even in the present day, have been in so lamentable a degree, back again from the Antitype to the type, from the spiritual to the ritual, from the Substance to the form, from Christ to man.

No worship ought now to be made dependent upon the presence of any one man or order of men; no service, or stated vocal utterance in the congregation, ought to be allowed to interfere with the operations of the Lord's free Spirit. We thankfully recognize, as a means of edification,

the preaching of the Gospel, and offerings of public prayer or thanksgiving, under the renewed anointing of the Holy Ghost ; but we dare not make these dependent upon human arrangements, or exclude, by any such arrangements, the silent and unseen, but not unfelt ministrations of the Spirit of Christ, "dividing to every man severally, as He wills."

FROM AN ADDRESS ISSUED BY THE YEARLY MEETING, 1841,
ENTITLED "A TESTIMONY TO THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST
IN HIS CHURCH."

It is the prerogative of Christ to call and qualify by the Holy Spirit his servants to minister in word and doctrine, and to preach repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. In the earliest period of the Christian Church his Spirit, agreeably to ancient prophecy, was poured upon servants and upon handmaidens ; and we believe that He continues to call, from the young and from the old, from the unlearned and from the wise, from the poor and from the rich, from women as well as from men, those whom He commissions to declare unto others the way of salvation.

The servants of Christ who labour in the ministry are to be highly esteemed for their work's sake ; and when, at his call, they leave their outward avocations to preach the Gospel, their outward wants should be cheerfully supplied, if needful. Yet we consider the gift of the ministry to be of so pure and sacred a nature, that no payment should be made for its exercise, and that it ought never to be undertaken for pecuniary remuneration. As the gift is free, the exercise of it ought to be free also, in accordance with the precept of our Lord, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

In accordance with the views already stated, we consider that no provision of man's arrangement ought to be resorted to for qualifying those who feel themselves called to minister

unto others. We believe it to be the duty of the ministers of the Gospel to be diligent, in the fear of God, in reading the Holy Scriptures; neither do we undervalue human learning. But to subject any to a course of teaching, as a necessary preparation for the ministry, is, in our apprehension, to interfere with that work of the Holy Spirit which our Lord carries forward in the hearts of those whom He calls to preach his Gospel unto others, or to minister to the conditions of the people.

FROM THE GENERAL EPISTLES, 1835, 1880.

We confess our continued conviction that all the ceremonies of the Jewish law were fulfilled and ended by the death of Christ, and that no shadows in the worship of God were instituted by our Lord, or have any place in the Christian dispensation.

The worship which He appointed is a worship for which He provided no ritual. It may be without words, as well as with them; but, whether in silence or in utterance, it "must be in spirit and in truth." He is Himself the propitiation and the High Priest, the "one Mediator between God and men." Through Him all believers have the same privilege of free "access by one Spirit unto the Father." No man, or order of men, can worship for the rest. No priests distinct from the congregation were appointed by Christ; the whole company of believers, redeemed by his blood, being themselves called, under the anointing of the Spirit, to be "an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." The word *priest* is never applied in the New Testament to the Christian minister as such.

We accept every command of our Lord Jesus Christ, in what we believe to be its true evangelical import, as absolutely conclusive. For obedience to his commands,

“Swear not at all,” “Love your enemies,” many of our Friends in earlier and in later times, on both sides of the Atlantic, have endured grievous sufferings, some even unto death. The question of outward ordinances is, with us, a question, not as to the authority of Christ, but as to his real meaning. Language more explicit can scarcely be imagined than that referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the prophet Jeremiah was inspired to portray the distinguishing features of the New Covenant. Outward rites were among the special marks of the Old Covenant. The New Covenant was to be the opposite of this, “not according to the Old.” The prophecy of Jeremiah is the only place in the ancient Scriptures in which the term “a new covenant” occurs. And may we not believe that in pronouncing the words, “This is my blood of the New Covenant,”* our Lord Jesus Christ appropriated to Himself this great prophecy, and thereby proclaimed the Gospel to be a dispensation, not of type or symbol, but of spiritual reality? He is the Lamb of God, the true Passover, whose “precious blood,” offered upon the cross once for all, is no typical, but a real, all-availing atonement, never to be repeated. The law to be written on the heart under this “New Covenant” is, in like manner, no symbol, but a most real experience: “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” making “free from the law of sin and death.”

It continues to be our settled conviction that, in establishing this “New Covenant,” the Lord Jesus Christ did not design that there should be any rite or outward observance of permanent obligation in his Church. His teaching, as in his parables, or as in the command to wash one another’s feet, was often in symbols; but it ought ever to be received in the light of his own emphatic declaration, “The words that I

* “Testament” being translated “Covenant” in Heb. viii. 8, and elsewhere.

speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." His baptism is the baptism with "the Holy Ghost, and with fire." He is Himself "the bread of life." The eating of his body and the drinking of his blood is not an outward act. They truly partake of them who habitually rest upon the sufferings and death of their Lord as their only hope, and to whom the indwelling Spirit gives of the fulness which is in Christ. It is this inward and spiritual partaking which is, as we believe, the true supper of the Lord. The new commandment, under this "New Covenant," is, according to his own teaching, that of LOVE,—a love like his own,—“as I have loved you ;” love grounded on the “peace” given by Him, and sustained and made fruitful by a continual participation in his life. His presence with his Church is not to be by symbol or representation, but in the real communication of his own Spirit. “I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.” In the withdrawal of his bodily presence, this blessed Comforter remains to the Church the pledge of the power and continued care of its exalted King. He convinces of sin ; He testifies of Jesus ; He takes of the things of Christ, communicating to the believer and to the Church, in a gracious abiding manifestation, the “REAL PRESENCE” of the Lord. As the great Remembrancer, through whom the promises are fulfilled, He needs no ritual or priestly intervention in bringing to the experience of the true commemoration and communion. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.”

To abide in Christ the living Vine, to continue in his love, to live loose from the world, as those whom He has chosen and redeemed out of the world,—these were the injunctions of our adorable Redeemer as He went out to his last sufferings ; these are his commands of perpetual obligation

to his Church; and it is in the fulfilling of them that his followers enjoy the true communion,—the fruit of his intercession, “that they all may be one.”

CONCLUDING SUMMARY AND EXHORTATION, FROM THE GENERAL
EPISTLES, 1871, 1876, 1861.

In meditating on the high calling of the Church of God, we would again offer, in reverence and thanksgiving, the tribute of our unwavering allegiance to Him who is its glorified Head, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. He was in the beginning with God, and was God; by Him all things were made; in Him the glory of the Father is revealed, both in creation and in redemption. He is the Light of the world; the Word who “was made flesh”; in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Taking upon Him the form of a servant, He lived, He suffered, He died; being “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” “He is the propitiation for our sins”; yea, “for the sins of the whole world.” He rose from the dead; and, as our great High Priest, He is passed into the heavens, “now to appear in the presence of God for us.” He led captivity captive, and “having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost,” it is through his mediation that the baptism of the Spirit is bestowed. By his Spirit, man in his fallen condition is quickened to a new life, and becomes a partaker of that faith which, working by love, accepts Christ both as Saviour and as King. To Him “the Father hath given authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man.”

In this precious faith the Church of God has lived from age to age. “Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” “It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.” Through Him the redeemed in all generations have derived their light,

their forgiveness, and their joy. He is their peace, who hath reconciled them unto God, and in whom they are one. Let his people never forget his words: "Without me, ye can do nothing." It is only as individuals and as churches are united to Him, that they become truly incorporated, as members of his body, into the living and enduring succession of the people of God. Union with Him is life; separation from Him is death. In order to such a union we must accept Him as He has been pleased to reveal Himself. We must be subject to Him in all things; our understandings must be submitted to his truth, and our wills to the yoke of his love. His union with his people upon earth must, of necessity, be a spiritual union, and it is our privilege to believe that this union is to be enjoyed through the *immediate* presence of his own Spirit. From age to age this Holy Spirit of God attests his living power, still gathering in the sheep and the lambs to the fold of the one Shepherd. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." He alone can subdue the human heart, and work either repentance, or faith, or the fruits of holiness.

Beloved Friends, ye who in the riches of the Father's love have been partakers of the heavenly calling, may you receive with faith and thanksgiving, yet with a solemn sense of your responsibility, the words of the apostle, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One." Let the anointing which ye have received of Him abide in you, we entreat you; cleansing, guiding, sanctifying; causing you to grow up into Him in all things who is the Head. The cross-bearing follower of Jesus, who sits in penitential love and holy hope at his feet, knows most of this precious anointing. In such "the fruit of the Spirit" is brought forth; not only conviction for sin, repentance and faith, but love, joy, peace, the sense of pardoning mercy, an humble reliance on sanctifying grace, the disposition of heart which finds its continual satisfaction in loving, serving, and pleasing God; and, to crown all, the

blessed hope of finally resting and worshipping with the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are written in heaven. Oh! then, that neither the hurry of active life, nor the pressure of even necessary duty, may withdraw any from that retired, watchful frame, in which the soul, thirsting for the living God, still breathes the fervent petition, "Thy will be done."

PART II.

CHRISTIAN PRACTICE.

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CHAPTER I.

MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.

1. OUR religious Meetings are designed to be opportunities for spiritual profit and refreshment; and General they will become such as they are entered upon in testimony. a spirit of earnest devotion and prayer. We recognize the value of silence not as an end, but as a means towards the attainment of the end; a silence not of listlessness or of vacant musing, but of holy expectation before the Lord. He that cometh unto God must believe that He is what He has declared himself to be, and that access to him can only be in the way of his own appointment. The veil has been rent for us; the door of access has been opened once for all. We are invited freely to "enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." The Lord waiteth that He may be gracious. How mighty are his silent operations, whether in nature or in grace! We are daily witnesses of his infinite power, as he noiselessly works maintaining the stars in their

courses, and causing the seed to germinate and spring up, and all around to be fruitful to his praise. And shall we cease to believe in and reverence his silent and immediate working, by his unseen but not unfelt Spirit, upon our minds and hearts? The recognition of this is in no degree inconsistent with the full acceptance of his varied operations in quickening and guiding the vocal services of the Church. It is our privilege and joy to recognize all these; and it is our prayer that every talent may be more and more given up to his preparing and sanctifying power. Thus would there be a place and a time for Him to work according to his own will and way; the silent waiting and the vocal offerings would all be in sweet harmony, and God in all things would be glorified through Jesus Christ. 1879. P. E.

2. As it hath been our care and practice from the beginning that an open testimony for the Lord should be borne, and a public standard for truth and righteousness upheld in the power and Spirit of God, by our open and known Meetings, so it is our advice and judgment that all Friends gathered in the name of Jesus keep up these public testimonies in their respective places, and do not decline, forsake, or remove their public assemblies, because of times of suffering; as worldly, fearful and politic professors have done because of informers and the like persecutors: for such practices are not consistent with the nobility of the truth, and therefore not to be owned in the Church of Christ. 1675.

3. Let every one be watchful against an earthly spirit, that will choke the good seed, and bring forth a slighting or neglecting of your testimony in your First-day and Week-day Meetings, and bring a decay of your strength and zeal for God and his truth, by

reason whereof you will not be able to stand in the hour of temptation. 1689. P. E.

4. Though Meetings are sometimes held in silence, we tenderly beseech all Friends not to neglect their attendance; for the hungry soul will labour for bread, and the thirsty for the water of life; and the diligent hand will make rich in that treasure which is of an enduring substance. 1724. P. E.

Meeting
not to be
neglected,
though
sometimes
silent.

5. In your religious Meetings for the worship of God, both on the first and other days of the week, be diligent to wait on Him, whereby you may renew your strength, and witness Him your sufficient help; for surely many of us have cause thankfully to remember his early visitations in the assemblies of his people, where He broke in upon our hearts with his power and love, and did, in the needful time, administer help, comfort and counsel; whereby, in the renewings thereof, we have been upheld in a faithful testimony and in the discharge of our duty to Him. 1725. P. E.

Diligent
waiting.

6. Although the labours of such as are called forth by the Spirit of Christ, and instructed thereby rightly to divide the word of truth, are highly serviceable in the Church; yet the aim and design of every true gospel minister is to direct the minds of all to the divine teachings of the Holy Spirit, and to wait upon and have their whole trust and expectation on the Lord alone. And as the religious strength and communion, both of preachers and hearers, consist in their united dependence on the power and spirit of Christ, their Guide and Leader; so where any part of that dependence is broken off from Him, the holy Head, and placed on any instrument or member of the body, it hath been sometimes experienced to become a weight or burden on such instrument, and a real impediment

Each to
depend
wholly on
Christ.

to its present service. Wherefore, brethren, we beseech you that in all your assemblies for the worship of God your eye be single unto Him, your expectation fixed on Him alone, and your faith standing in his power and Spirit; thus may you grow and be established therein, and be made one another's strength in the Lord. 1753. P. E.

And let the hearers be watchful over their own spirits, and not forwardly judge or censure the testimonies which may be delivered amongst them; for if Against hasty judgment of ministry. they be not very careful and diligent in attending upon the Lord in Meetings, they are liable to mistake in the judgment they may pass on the ministry. Now, this being a matter of great moment, for the preservation of love and concord in the churches, and knowing the danger and ill consequences which attend a hasty and censorious judging of the ministry, we think it necessary to caution Friends not to let their own spirits sway them, but to let the Spirit of God rule and reign in their hearts; for this will preserve all in sweetness and tenderness one towards another. 1731.

7. We tenderly exhort such as, through fear of neglecting their temporal concerns, or other considerations, Things of God to have the first place. are kept from a due attendance of Meetings for Worship, seriously to consider that gracious promise left upon record: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Some of us have to testify that our outward affairs have not suffered by giving up the few hours set apart for religious worship; but on the contrary, our minds have been thereby greatly strengthened to come up with propriety in the duties we owe to God, to our families, and to all mankind. Let us call to remembrance the zeal of our honourable predecessors, who, when they had great reason to expect they should be driven into noisome and pestilential

prisons, sent into banishment, or subjected to other grievous sufferings for meeting together to worship God according to their consciences, yet in the strength of that holy faith and love which supported them in suffering, failed not constantly to keep up their Meetings at the hazard of all, and expense of many of their lives, liberties, and properties. 1758. P. E.

8. They who are obedient to the universal injunction of our Saviour, "Watch," are prepared for the due Preparation fulfilling of every duty; and eminently so, for of heart. that most essential one of worship. How many feel themselves languid, when assembled for this solemn purpose, for want of a previous preparation of heart! The mind, crowded with thoughts on outward things in approaching the place for public worship, and resuming them with avidity on its return, is not likely to fill up the interval to profit; and to such, their meeting together may prove a form as empty as any of those out of which, we believe, Truth called our forefathers, and still calls us. 1800. P. E.

9. "Where two or three," saith our Lord, "are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of On diligent attendance. them." In these words He invites us to meet not only one with another, but, in so doing, with Himself also. Shall the King of kings and Lord of lords condescend to offer his Divine presence for our good, and shall we, his dependent creatures, set so light by his inestimable kindness as, either wilfully or negligently, to let slip those precious seasons wherein we might receive his blessed assistance, so necessary to our help and salvation? Shall the poor, perishing gratifications of sense and self-love, or any inconveniences of a trivial nature, be suffered to prevent our dutiful attendance upon Him, in whom alone stands our everlasting interest? Shall a cloudy sky, a little wet, a little cold, a little ease to

the flesh, a view to a little earthly gain, or any common incident, furnish an excuse for declining this duty, and thereby depriving ourselves of the blessed advantage, often vouchsafed to the faithful, of enjoying heavenly communion together in spirit with the Lord of life and glory? 1765. P. E.

10. A punctual attendance at the hour appointed for public worship is a matter of no small importance. Punctuality enjoined. If we hurry away from our outward occupations to the Meeting-house, thinking that, by the delay of a few minutes, we shall not be long behind our brethren, we are in great danger of having our thoughts employed on that in which we have been engaged, and of interrupting that holy silence which, it is believed, would often prevail, if all the members of a Meeting were assembled not only in one place, but at one time, with one and the same great object in view. 1821.

11. This Meeting, regarding the attendance of all our Attendance of the young. religious Meetings as important in the training up of our youth in a life and conversation consistent with our Christian profession, thinks it right affectionately to express its concern, that Friends, on placing out their children in situations, may endeavour to make arrangements with their employers for their enjoyment of this privilege. 1837.

12. Whilst we desire to cherish and to inculcate true Friends encouraged to keep to their own Meetings. Christian charity towards those from whom we differ, we would affectionately encourage all our members, in the performance of the duty and privilege of public worship, to confine themselves to the attendance of our own Meetings, whenever this is practicable. It is highly important that all our members should cherish a lively interest in the congregations of which they

form part ; an interest which has in many cases been weakened by the practice of attending, sometimes at one place of worship, and sometimes at another. 1840. P. E. 1883.

13. This Meeting has had some weighty considerations brought before it in relation to the attitude of soul in which we should endeavour to present ourselves before the Lord in our Meetings for Worship. It is our earnest desire that, while not unmindful of our own great needs, we should nevertheless allow our hearts to be drawn into sympathy with the wants of the assembled congregation ; especially recognizing it as a duty on these occasions to be exercised before the Lord on behalf of our brethren and sisters, that their needs may be supplied,—that the Holy Spirit may work in their hearts,—that the word in season may be spoken,—and that if that word be given to ourselves, we may be strengthened to utter it, without waiting for large openings in ministry, but standing ready to hand out the portion given us to distribute by the Great Master of our assemblies. 1883.

14. Pure worship under the Gospel stands neither in forms nor in the formal disuse of forms : it may be without words as well as with them, but it *must* be “ in spirit and in truth.” It is not the mere outward gathering together, but the inward gathering of our hearts unto the Lord, that makes a true Meeting for Worship. This worship depends not upon numbers. Where two or three are gathered in the name of Christ, there is a church, and Christ the living Head in the midst of them. In his name, therefore, to use the language of George Fox, may you seek to keep all your Meetings ; “ that you may feel Him in the midst of you exercising his offices. As He is a Prophet whom God has raised up to open his mysteries to you, and as He is a Shepherd who has laid down his

life for you, to feed you, so hear his voice ; and as He is a Counsellor and a Commander, follow Him and his counsel ; and as He is a Bishop to oversee you with his heavenly power and Spirit ; and as He is a Priest who offered Himself for you, who is made higher than the heavens, who sanctifies his people, his Church, and presents them to God without blemish, spot or wrinkle, so know Him in all his offices, exercising them amongst you, and in you." 1855. P. E.

15. He who died for his people to save them from their sins, ever liveth to make intercession for them. Spiritual offerings. Through his mediation, without the necessity for any inferior instrumentality, is the Father to be approached and reverently worshipped. The Lord Jesus has for ever fulfilled and ended the typical and sacrificial worship under the law, by the offering up of Himself upon the cross for us, once for all. He has opened the door of access into the inner sanctuary, and graciously appointed spiritual offerings for the service of his temple, suited to the several conditions of all who worship in spirit and in truth. The broken and the contrite heart, the confession of the soul prostrate before God, the prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, the earnest wrestling of the spirit, the outpouring of humble thanksgiving, the spiritual song and melody of the heart, the simple exercise of faith, the self-denying service of love, —these are among the sacrifices which He, our merciful and faithful High Priest, is Himself pleased to prepare by his Spirit in the hearts of them that receive Him, and to present with acceptance unto God. 1857. P. E.

16. You know, dear Friends, that it is not to man, but Expectant faith. unto the Lord alone, that we must look for the nourishment of the soul. Bearing in mind the words of our holy Redeemer, "No man cometh unto the

Father but by me," may it be your concern, in all your assemblies, to gather in the name of Jesus. That which is to be sought after is not silence merely, but worship,—even the worship of the Father "in spirit and in truth." But let not any think that, because their Meetings have been usually held in silence, therefore they are to go on from Meeting to Meeting, never expecting anything else. The true worshipper is he who is resigned to every intimation of the Divine will ; not prejudging the counsels of his Lord, nor allowing any habits or fears of his own to bring him under a bondage wherein the word of the Lord can neither have free course nor be glorified. A self-imposed silence in man's will may be scarcely less formal or hurtful than words wanting fitness or power. 1860. P. E.

Danger of
self-imposed
silence.

17. Guard against an expenditure of time and strength upon the things of earth, which leaves little to be devoted to the interests of the soul. Do your utmost to make your Mid-week Meetings prior engagements, to which, except under very special circumstances, all others must be subject. Let parents consider how prejudicial an influence it must have upon the characters of their children, to train them up in the habitual neglect of these Meetings. In connection with this subject, we have been brought into close sympathy with members of very small Meetings, who find in them little outward encouragement. Remember, dear Friends, that the true worshippers meet not as separate units, but as one body. Gathered in the name of Jesus, through Him they "have access by one Spirit unto the Father," as members of that spiritual household which is one, whether on earth or in heaven. 1873. P. E.

Mid-week
and small
Meetings.

18. Many who are burdened with work and pressing engagements, can speak with thankfulness of the rest and

refreshment they have found in the diligent attendance of our Mid-week Meetings. Coming together, often from very diverse occupations, to acknowledge their common dependence upon our Heavenly Father, and to gather unto Him through our Lord Jesus Christ, they have realised, according to his promise, his healing and comforting presence. Far from thinking that we must absent ourselves because, when the hour for meeting comes round, our minds are full of family, professional, or business cares, from which we seem powerless to part, let us persevere in our attendance, and take all the burden to our Heavenly Father. Help comes in the very endeavour to forget our own needs, and to seek in prayer the welfare of our fellow-worshippers, with whose difficulties we are thus enabled more fully to sympathise. We cannot afford to lose such opportunities for renewing our strength for the battle of life, by waiting upon the Lord. As the attendance of a Meeting for Worship in the middle of the week becomes habitual, our practice will soon become generally known; and it may be a most useful form of Christian ministry, in this busy bustling time, to let those who do business with us know that we, at least, feel it a necessity of our Christian life, to turn aside for an hour in the middle of the week, in order to unite with our brethren in waiting upon the Lord. 1883.

19. In all your Meetings, whether on First-days or in the middle of the week, may yours, dear Friends, be a living worship, in which, as the adopted children of one Father, you may worship as members of his one family, not in individual isolation, nor thinking of yourselves alone. "Consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works;" not forgetting the ignorant or the careless, seeing that ye also "were as sheep going astray." In this worship the privileges of the priesthood of believers

are to be enjoyed. The true priest must have somewhat to offer. Each should covet earnestly the best gifts for the edifying of the body; and thus, even in the smaller bands of faithful worshippers, there would be no lack; the flock would be fed, and the Church built up in Christ. Whilst thus engaged on behalf of our own congregations, it is no less important that we should seek for ability to discharge the great duty of the Christian Church, in carrying the glad tidings of salvation to those around us. To the Church is given the commission to hold forth to the world the word of life; to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ; to beseech men, in Christ's stead, "be ye reconciled to God." 1877. P. E.

CHAPTER II.

PRIVATE RETIREMENT AND PRAYER.

1. FREQUENT waiting in stillness on the Lord, for the renewal of strength, keeps the mind at home in its proper place and duty, and out of all unprofitable association and converse, whether amongst those of our own or of other professions. Much hurt may accrue to the religious mind by long and frequent conversation on temporal matters, especially by interesting ourselves too much in them; for there is a leaven therein, which, being suffered to prevail, indisposes and benumbs the soul, and prevents its frequent ascendings in living aspirations towards the Fountain of eternal life. 1770. P. E.

2. In a well-ordered family, short opportunities of religious retirement frequently occur, in which the mind may be turned in secret aspiration to the Author of all our blessings; and which have often proved times of more than transient benefit. It is our present concern that no exception to this practice may be found amongst us; whether it take place on the reading of a portion of the Sacred Volume, or when we are assembled to partake of the provisions with which we are supplied for the sustenance of the body. May the experience of us all be such, that we can adopt the words of the Psalmist, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray." 1817. P. E.

3. In the Sacred Writings no duty is more clearly set forth than that of prayer. Prayer is the aspiration of ^{The privilege} the heart unto God : it is one of the first engage- ^{of prayer.} ments of the awakened soul ; and it becomes the clothing of the minds of those whose lives are regulated by the fear and love of their Creator. We continue to believe that our disuse of set forms of prayers is founded on a correct view of the spiritual nature of the Gospel dispensation. At the same time we are persuaded that all who have a just sense of the value of their immortal souls, and of their own great need of help from above, must rejoice with thankfulness, in knowing and in feeling that they may pray unto our Father who is in heaven. May each with a sincere and believing heart reverently approach the throne of grace ; trusting in the mediation of Him through whom we “ have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Let none be discouraged from the performance of this duty by a sense of their transgressions ; but in humility and sincere repentance let them implore the forgiveness of God, who, as they patiently wait before Him, will in his own time supply all their need. 1823. P. E. 1828. P. E.

4. Prayer being, in the Divine appointment, essential to our spiritual health, we would earnestly press upon ^{Prayer the} all to seek for opportunities, in the course of each ^{duty of all.} day, for private retirement and waiting upon the Lord ; and tenderly to cherish those precious, but often-gentle and easily resisted motions of the Lord’s Spirit, which would contrite and humble our hearts, and draw them forth in fervent petitions for that spiritual food which alone can supply our daily, our continual need. May none amongst us be living in a state of unconcern, insensible to the righteous judgment of God upon all that is unholy ; their sins, unrepented of and unforgiven, still resting on their souls : rather let them be encouraged to come in deep humiliation to the mercy-

seat, there to plead for pardon and plenteous redemption, in the all-availing name of our crucified Redeemer. 1854. P. E.

5. The practice of frequent retirement, and of seeking frequent retirement. counsel and blessing from the Lord in humble dependence upon his guidance, is one of unspeakable value. Not only does it tend to heavenly-mindedness, but, as a necessary consequence, it strengthens the union of the branch with the vine; and the daily and continued circulation of life from the root gives greenness and fruitfulness. How precious in a congregation is the influence of the contrite, the humble, and the prayerful; of them that hunger and thirst after righteousness; who, as servants waiting for their Lord, breathe the atmosphere of joy and peace in believing. 1865. P. E.

6. We mourn over those who are depriving themselves of much blessing, in not more freely yielding up private and family prayer. their hearts to communion with their Father in heaven. Little prayer implies little faith; and with little faith there can be but little love: for this cause, we cannot but fear that many are in a state of spiritual sickness, and that some even sleep. We would entreat these not to allow their confessed weakness to discourage them from prayer; it ought rather to be an inducement to this blessed duty. "Therefore," saith the prophet, "will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you." "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought." It is not the absence of his heart-tendering visitations, but our own hesitancy or want of faith, that we have to deplore. The broken and the contrite heart need not hold back. How full is the promise, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you." May parents or heads of families be under no undue restraint in the exercise of this privilege before their children or house-

holds. The qualification for such services may differ in degree from that which should be waited for on more public occasions. The sense of need, of parental responsibility, of the priceless value of the souls entrusted to our care, may not only warrant, but require, such acts of dedication on the part of those who are not called to a more public ministry; whilst our countless blessings claim the tribute of praise from thankful hearts. 1873. P. E.

7. Prayer is the duty and the privilege of all, of every age and of every class. Life presses on with its inevitable engagements. He who is a stranger to prayer enters upon them in his own strength, and finds, to his unspeakable loss, that a life without prayer is a life practically without God. The command, "Ask, and it shall be given you," is not fulfilled by merely one petition. The Christian's life is a continued asking; and a thankful using of that which is received. The thirst that prompts the petition produces, as it is satisfied, still deeper longings, which prepare for yet more bounteous supplies from the inexhaustible Fountain. And ought a life of prayer to be other than a life of praise? As the Lord's children humbly accept all that they receive as from his pure bounty, each day brings them fresh pledges of their Father's love. Satisfied with the goodness of his house, they will be still praising Him; heart answering to heart,—“Bless the Lord, oh my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.” 1874. 1877. P. E.

8. “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” Neither the church nor the individual can ever outgrow this blessed duty. Both by precept and example, the Lord Jesus Christ teaches his people to pray. Prayer is the expression at once of our dependence and of our need. It is the cry of the child

lifting up his heart to his Father in heaven. Quickened by the Spirit it becomes a sweet exercise of faith in Christ, a continued remembrance of his sacrifice and mediation. The sense of need is the true warrant for prayer. All are invited to this great privilege. 1882. P.

9. Often as we have of late years dwelt upon the subject of prayer, the breathing of soul that has found expression from many hearts in the course of this Meeting, has been a cause of thankful rejoicing, in the belief that our Father in heaven is waiting to bless, and to pour out upon us a yet larger measure of "the Spirit of grace and of supplications." Be not afraid, dear Friends, to open your hearts wide that you may receive of this blessing. Let your ears be awakened to hear the gentlest whispers of his love. As retirement and waiting upon God in prayer and praise become habitual, they will lead to a sense of their preciousness in the family and social circle. Whilst every approach to formalism is to be guarded against, may the assembling of our families and households ever be times of reverential waiting and worship, wherein living prayers and praises may ascend with acceptance in the name of the Lord Jesus. 1883. P. E.

CHAPTER III.

ON READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

1. LET the Holy Scriptures be diligently searched, and seriously read by Friends, with due regard to the Holy Spirit from whence they came, and by which they are truly opened. 1720. P. E.

The Scrip-
tures to be
searched.

2. The Holy Scriptures are the means of conveying and preserving to us an account of the things most surely to be believed concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, and the fulfilling of the prophecies relating thereto. Let all, especially elders in the church and masters of families, both by example and advice, impress on the minds of the younger a reverent esteem of those Sacred Writings, and advise them to a frequent reading and meditating therein. And, Friends, you may, at proper times and seasons, give the youth to understand that the same good experience of the work of sanctification, through the operations of the Spirit of God, to which the Holy Scriptures plentifully bear testimony, is to be witnessed by believers in all generations, as well as by those in the first ages of Christianity; in doing which some account of your own experience will be helpful to them. This we recommend as the most effectual means of begetting and establishing in their minds a firm belief of the Christian doctrine in

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general, contained in the Bible, as well as of the necessity of the aid and help of the operations of the Holy Spirit of God in the hearts of men in particular; and of preserving them from being defiled with the many pernicious notions and principles, contrary to sound doctrine, which are at this time industriously dispersed in the nation, to the reproach of the Christian profession in general. 1728. P. E.

3. We recommend it as an incumbent duty on Friends to cause their children to be frequent in reading the Holy Scriptures, and to observe the examples of such children as in Scripture are recorded to have early learned the fear of the Lord, and hearkened to his counsel; instructing them in the fear of the Lord, planting upon their spirits impressions of reverence towards God, from whom they have their daily support; showing them they ought not to offend Him, but love, serve, and honour Him, in whose hand all blessings are. 1709. P. E.

4. We tenderly and earnestly advise and exhort all parents and masters of families, that they exert themselves in the wisdom of God, and in the strength of his love, to instruct their children and families in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion contained in the Holy Scriptures; and that they excite them to the diligent reading of those Sacred Writings, which plainly set forth the miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, blessed example, meritorious death, and glorious resurrection, ascension, and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and to educate their children in the belief of those important truths, as well as in the belief of the inward manifestation and operation of the Spirit of God on their own minds; that they may reap the benefit and advantage thereof, for their own peace and everlasting happiness, which

is infinitely preferable to all other considerations. We therefore exhort, in the most earnest manner, that all be very careful in this respect; a neglect herein Monthly and Quarterly Meetings being, in our judgment, very blameworthy. And to stir up Friends to this duty. further, where any deficiency of this sort appears, we recommend to Monthly and Quarterly Meetings that they stir up those whom it may concern to their duty therein. 1732. P. E.

5. The possession of the Holy Scriptures is a precious privilege for which we must give account. May The Scriptures to be read in a devotional spirit. both the private and the family reading of them ever be conducted with reverence, and with minds gathered under the heavenly teachings of the Holy Spirit. Let not the period of silent waiting, on these occasions, be so short as to exclude or interrupt inward retirement and prayer. And we would encourage our dear Friends so to dwell under spiritual exercise on account of their beloved children and the other members of their households, that the word of tender counsel or encouragement, or the offering of prayer or thanksgiving, seasoned with grace, may not be unduly withheld. 1862. P. E.

6. While we are anxious that all our members should exercise a daily diligence in the perusal of the Prayer for Divine teaching. Partial and exclusive views to be avoided. Sacred Volume, we would earnestly invite them to wait and pray for that Divine immediate teaching, which can alone effectually illuminate its pages, and unfold their contents to the eye of the soul. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." As this is our humble endeavour, the various features of Divine truth will be gradually unfolded to the seeking mind. We beseech you, dear Friends, carefully to avoid all partial and

exclusive views of religion, for these have ever been found to be the nurse of error. "The truth as it is in Jesus" forms a perfect whole; its parts are not to be separated, much less opposed to each other. They all consist in beautiful harmony; they must be gratefully accepted in their true completeness, and applied with all diligence to their practical purpose. That purpose is the renovation of our fallen nature, and the salvation of our never-dying souls. 1835. P. E.

7. Our minds have been brought into religious solicitude on behalf of our younger members, and especially such as may be in situations from home, in the desire that the care which, whether under the parental roof or in our several schools, may have been bestowed upon their religious instruction, may still be continued in this critical period of their life. Deeply impressed with the claims which these have upon our sympathy and nurturing care, and with ^{Bible-classes} encouraged. the importance of endeavouring to imbue their minds with sound religious principles, we think it right to encourage well-concerned Friends, in the exercise of a kind and Christian interest for this and every other portion of our Society, to consider whether, without in anywise interfering with our Meetings for Worship, arrangements might not be made for meeting together for the serious perusal of the Holy Scriptures. Such engagements, if rightly entered into, would, we believe, tend to promote, and not in any degree to supersede, the private perusal of the Sacred Volume.

When thus occupied in an humble and teachable disposition, and in reverent dependence upon the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit, opportunities would be afforded for the illustration of our religious principles, and for the mutual edification and establishment of our members in the faith and hope of the Gospel. 1861.

8. We advert with much interest to the increased attention given by many of our members to the careful perusal of the Sacred Writings. May this be ever associated with a deepening sense that it is only "through faith which is in Christ Jesus" that they can "make wise unto salvation." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The Comforter alone can open the understanding to "the truth as it is in Jesus," and to a right sense of its harmony and just proportions. And there are experiences of the inner life which, though in perfect unison with Scripture, may not be there literally described. They can only be understood as they are unfolded to the soul, waiting in simple dependence upon that Spirit who "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1861. P. E.

9. We would earnestly caution our members—though we trust that such a caution is needed by very few—against any attempts to undermine the authority of Holy Scripture. The more we are experimentally acquainted with the mind of Christ, the more shall we be taught the inestimable value of those records of which He is the central theme. Their inspiration will become not a matter of opinion merely, but of experience, as the great Inspirer of all Scripture opens and applies the precious truths which are there revealed.

Such an experience as this is still the true antidote to that speculative unbelief which pervades so much of the popular reading of the present day. For the Truth there is nothing to fear; it is safe in the keeping of God. But to the sincere inquirer we would say, Dwell not with thy doubts, but with thy convictions. Prove the Truth for thyself. Put it to the test not so much by arguing as by acting upon it. Submit thyself unto God, in the acceptance of his mercy, and in the doing of his will. 1861. P. E. 1879. P. E.

10. Placed as the Bible now is within the reach of all, let it not be thrust aside in the multiplicity of our reading. Rather may we feel our responsibility in the possession of such a treasure; and not only read it in our families, but individually set apart a portion of each day for its prayerful perusal. Let us search the Scriptures for ourselves. To the Christian the Old Testament comes with the solemn and repeated attestation of his Lord. As it is read in the light of the New, its meaning is unveiled, and the humble disciple is taught to discern the unity and mutual adaptation of the whole, and the many-sidedness and harmony of its testimony to Christ. The great Inspirer of Scripture is ever its true Interpreter. He performs this office in condescending love, not by superseding our understandings, but by renewing and enlightening them. Where Christ presides, idle speculation is hushed; his doctrine is learned in the doing of his will, and all knowledge ripens into a deeper and richer experience of his love. 1879. P. E.

CHAPTER IV.

ON GIFTS AND STEWARDSHIPS IN THE CHURCH.

SECTION I.—The Ministry of the Gospel.

- „ II.—On Faithfulness in our several Stewardships for the Benefit of Others.
 - „ III.—Extracts from the Epistles of George Fox on the Importance of Faithfulness.
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SECTION I.—THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL.

1. ALL true ministry of the Gospel is from the appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is He who, by his Spirit, prepares and qualifies for the work. The gift must be exercised in continued dependence upon Him; and blessed is that ministry in which man is humbled, and Christ and his grace exalted. Gifts, precious as they may be, must not be mistaken for grace. They add to our responsibility, but they do not raise the Minister above his brethren. All are not called to be public preachers; yet it is not for any in his own will to say that he may not be so called. Let none, therefore, give themselves up to listlessness or unconcern, but let all be faithful in their appointed places. The privileges of training and education have led many to a knowledge of Holy Scripture, and to a cultivation of the understanding which may become truly serviceable, if yielded up in simple dedication to the Lord's own teaching. But how much depends upon

All true
ministry
appointed
by and dependent
upon
Christ.

this dedication. May every talent, whether natural or acquired, be offered upon the Lord's altar; may every crown be cast at the feet of Jesus; and as He is pleased to call any into his service, whether of our brethren or our sisters, may every gift be exercised in singleness of heart as unto the Lord. If we would, as a Church, vindicate and exemplify the testimony of Christianity against an exclusive and separate priesthood, it must be in becoming ourselves conformed to the mind of Christ, and in being subject to his government through the power of his Spirit. Thus will each be taught and qualified to take his part in the true Priesthood of believers. 1871. 1876. P. E.

2. A living, rightly authorized ministry has ever been a blessing to the Church. Our views on the nature and source of Gospel ministry have undergone no change. It is the prerogative of Christ Jesus our Lord to choose and to put forth his own Ministers. A clear apprehension of Scripture doctrine, or a heart enlarged in love to others, are not of themselves sufficient for this work. Whatever may be the talents or scriptural knowledge of any, unless there be a distinct call to the ministry, our religious Society cannot acknowledge it; and except there be a sense of the renewed putting forth and quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, we believe it to be utterly unsafe to move in this office. We thankfully believe that, from the early rise of our Society, the Lord has been pleased to bestow this gift upon servants and upon handmaidens without respect of persons, and that it has been exercised in his fear and to the honour of his name; and we would humbly acknowledge that He does not at this day withhold from us this living ministry. We pray that He may be pleased to grant us its continuance and increase, and to keep us from ever desiring any other. That which is uttered under the qualification already set forth may sometimes be only in a few sentences; but as a holy

care prevails to move only under the leadings of the Spirit of Truth, unexcited by the activity and affection of the natural man, it will contribute to the edification of the body in love. 1835. 1842. P. E.

3. The calling of the Christian Minister has its rich rewards and privileges; but at no period in the history of the Church has it been without its special trials and dangers. The caution of the apostle is at all times needed: "Giving no offence in anything, that the ministry be not blamed." Ministers, even those of large experience and gifts, may profitably be led into a review of their ministry in its varied relations. May all be preserved in the exercise of it in the life and power of the Spirit,—dividing the word aright,—not falling short of the measure of the gift, and yet not exceeding it. Public prayer, thanksgiving, and praise ought ever to spring from a living sense of the wants and condition of the congregation. In this solemn service may all be impressed with the importance of their words being few and full. 1868.

Special
counsel to
Ministers.

4. This Meeting desires and hopes that you whom the Lord hath gifted with a public testimony for his name and truth will, in this day of liberty, be diligent to visit the heritage of God in their Meetings, and more especially those least frequented. 1695. P. E.

Ministers to
be diligent
in visiting
Meetings.

5. Dear brethren and sisters, all of you have a godly care of judging or contradicting one another in public meetings, or showing marks or signs of division therein amongst Ministers or others; it being of a pernicious consequence to bring blame or contempt upon the ministry, and a great hurt to our youth and others. 1716. P. E.

Ministers not
publicly to
judge or
contradict
each other.

6. Advised, that Ministers, as well as Elders and others, To keep to sound words or Scripture terms. in all their preaching, writing, and conversing about the things of God, do keep to the form of sound words or Scripture terms; and that none pretend to be wise above what is there written, and in such pretended wisdom go about to explain the things of God in the words which man's wisdom teaches. 1728. P. E.

7. As the Lord in his mercy is breathing afresh on several Young ministers. of our youth of both sexes, and fitting them for his service, we recommend it to the Elders in every Meeting that they tenderly watch over all young Ministers, and advise and help them, as they in the wisdom of truth may be opened thereunto; nourishing that which is right and which comes forth in the savour of life, and discouraging everything that is unbecoming the ministry. 1736.

8. We further entreat you that in all your religious Meetings for the worship of Almighty God you wait in humble reverence for the influence of the Word of life. Be cautious not to move in acts of devotion in your own will: set not self to work, but patiently attend and wait for the gift and enlivening power of the Divine Spirit, without which your performances will be unacceptable and like those of old, of which it was said, "Who hath required this at your hand?" 1742. P. E.

9. In much love we caution those Friends who are concerned in the work of the ministry to watch over To avoid censorious judgments. their own spirits, and not to be hasty or censorious in passing judgment respecting the state of those who hear them, but to manifest that, in the exercise of their ministry, they are led by the love of God. 1745.

10. This Meeting recommends to Ministers on all occasions, and more especially when about to leave home in the service of the Gospel, to take care that their outward affairs are so conducted and arranged as to prevent any dishonour being brought on our religious profession, through any neglect on the one hand, or, on the other, through their being immersed in the cares of the present life. 1833.

To have
outward
affairs duly
arranged.

11. Let none despise the shortness or simplicity of any offerings in the ministry, and let all be careful not to indulge in a criticising spirit, much less in controversy, or in a disposition to cavil or to judge their brethren. Such things are highly injurious and unbecoming; they lead off from that individual watchfulness and knowledge of ourselves which are essential to a growth in grace, and they are opposed to the meekness and lowliness of a disciple of Christ. Light conversation on the sacred truths of religion is also dangerous. 1835.

None to
despise short
or simple
offerings.

12. How large the wisdom, how tender the sympathy, required to be exercised towards those who believe themselves called to bear a public testimony to their Lord, especially in the earlier stages of their ministry! On the other hand, they ought to be open to the counsel of their more experienced brethren; and whilst seeking to minister for their Lord in the ability which He giveth, to be ever subject one to another in love. 1868.

Sympathy
for Ministers
encouraged.

13. Whilst greatly desiring an increase of labourers in the Gospel, we no less desire that the ministry amongst us may include the declaration of the whole truth as it is in Jesus, and that under his quickening power it may tend to bring many under the yoke of his love, and to edify and comfort his

Ministers to
study sound-
ness, clear-
ness, and
brevity.

people. Of whatever character the work may be in which such labourers are called to engage, let them regard it as not theirs, but their Lord's; and thus committing it into his hands, look to Him in lively faith for the needful wisdom and strength, coveting the enlargement of their gifts not in a multitude of words, but in the awakening and converting power of the Spirit. May all be diligent in the use of those means by which a growth in the gift may be promoted;—private retirement before God, meditation upon Holy Scripture, and prayer for ability to declare with clearness the simple Gospel of salvation under the anointing and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Such a cultivation of spiritual gifts is in no way incompatible with a full and implicit reliance on his immediate guidance. May those who are called to the ministry not neglect the gift which they have received, but study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 1868.

14. And you who are called to bear a public testimony to your Lord, let such a call be accepted as a motive Concluding
exhortation. to increased watchfulness and humility. Be willing to feel the weight of the service as well as its privilege. Yield up yourselves wholly to the operations of his Spirit who sitteth “as a refiner and purifier of silver,” to “purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Let self be laid low, and your will be given up to the Lord. Move only as He calls you, and be very watchful to know both the outflowing and the staying of the anointing oil. 1861. P. E. 1869. P. E.

SECTION II.—GENERAL ADVICE ON FAITHFULNESS IN OUR SEVERAL STEWARDSHIPS FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS.

1. Christ, who is Head over all things to the Church, and who hath promised to be in the midst of those gathered in his name, condescends to make use of his servants, by imparting to them spiritual gifts, to be exercised under the renewed anointing of the Holy Ghost, for the conversion of sinners, and for the edification, exhortation and comfort of the assembled worshippers. Each living member of the Church of Christ has a place of service, and to such the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit withal. We thankfully acknowledge the goodness of the Lord in the diversities of gifts, intellectual as well as spiritual, which, in his care for the Church, He is pleased to confer upon its several members. May we ever bear in mind that, however great their diversities, it is by the one Spirit they are given; however differing in the administrations, it is the same Lord; however diversified the operations, it is the same God which worketh all in all.

We believe that a freer exercise of the various gifts graciously bestowed upon our members might, under the Divine blessing, tend to the instruction, comfort, and edification of the body, and to the spreading of the "truth as it is in Jesus." We would therefore encourage Friends to be individually faithful in occupying the talent received, "as they that must give account"; in dependence upon his grace, and in loving service to Him, who loved them and gave Himself for them; remembering the apostolic injunction, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." 1861.

2. No life is too long for the performance of the duties which He who measures it out appoints for it. Motives to diligence. May you then, beloved Friends, in the middle or in more advanced stages of life, be faithful in your several stewardships. Whether it be in the family or in the shop, in the market, the bank, or the board-room,—in those things which belong to your private or to your public duties, let the light of the Gospel shine through all. The parent, the master, the man of business, the citizen, the servant,—each has a testimony to bear for Christ. Let all be willing to dwell under a sense of their responsibilities and of their needs. Let our prayers be fervent, in the name of Jesus, for ourselves and for others. May those upon whom it rightly devolves be diligent in feeding the Lord's flock, and in gathering souls to Christ. And may none, whatever their position, overlook the lesser openings of duty. A word of counsel, of reproof, or of encouragement, spoken in season, in ever so broken a manner, whether in the family and social circle, or more publicly, how good it is! Each may be called to manifest his interest, by word or deed, on behalf of a brother or a sister; and thus to follow in the footsteps of our Divine Master, whose whole life was marked by sympathy for the sorrows and infirmities of man. 1859. P. E.

3. Let none so overcharge themselves with business, pleasure, or other pursuits, or so give way to the love of ease, as in any degree to obstruct the exercise of their gifts, or hinder their right service. All duties to be performed as part of our service for Christ. This is a caution needful not only for those who occupy prominent stations in the church; it is applicable alike to all the living members, and to every gift with which they may be entrusted, whether for public or for private usefulness. How influential is the example of the Christian in the midst of his outward affairs, or

of the Christian mistress of a household, when the right ordering of time, and the allotment of the right place to each duty, render the due fulfilment of religious services perfectly compatible with the diligent discharge of secular avocations. And, on the other hand, has it not sometimes happened that those who, in their earlier life, had looked forward to a time of comparative leisure and exemption from outward care, in which they would devote themselves to increased religious work amongst their neighbours or in the Church, have, when that leisure has really come, allowed increased opportunity to be accompanied by even diminished service for their Lord and his cause? Assuredly it ought not so to be. If things are in their right places, best things will be uppermost, and joy in the Lord's work on earth will be increasingly known as a foretaste of his perfected service in heaven. 1865. P. E.

4. Against the kingdom of Satan the Church of Christ should ever wage an aggressive warfare in the strength of her living Lord; and each member, in subjection to Him, should prepare himself to take his part in the mighty conflict. Each has received a talent, with the charge, "Occupy till I come." Great as are the diversities of these talents, and varied as are their spheres of operation, we desire that every true disciple, in the solemn sense of that which he owes to Him who hath loved us, may be engaged to put up the prayer, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" In whole-hearted dedication and loving obedience, in dependence upon the help of the Holy Spirit, may each follow the leadings of his Lord, and diligently labour in his appointed duty. Among the many ministries devolving upon the members of the body of Christ, that which may be little in the estimation of man will not fail, if performed in love to Jesus, and with a single eye to his glory, to be owned and blessed of Him. In First-day school instruction; in visiting

The Christian's life an aggressive warfare.

the poor and the afflicted; in reading the Scriptures to them; in giving a tract with a few appropriate words; and in many other labours of Christian love, the Saviour may be served and the enlargement of his kingdom promoted. The young may gently influence the young; striving to win them to give their hearts to Him whose yoke is easy and whose burden is light; who, in every time of difficulty or sorrow, will be their ever-present Helper and Friend. 1866. P. E.

5. We owe much to the privileges of training and education. Many have enjoyed abundant advantages in their outward circumstances or social position. Our great responsibilities. How rich have been the manifestations of the love of God, and the visitations of his Spirit,—quicken- ing, constraining. May we accept the word of exhortation and entreaty. Be vigilant, be faithful. In all your pursuits and engagements, keep within the restraints of a tender and enlightened conscience. May the world be crucified unto you, and ye unto the world. Neglect no opportunity for doing good. “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning,” and ye yourselves, every one of you, “like unto men who wait for their Lord, that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately.” 1883. P. E.

6. We turn to our dear Friends, both younger and older, who have been led, under the constraining influences of love to Christ, into varied fields of labour amongst those around them. Encouragement to mission workers. In assuring these of our warm sympathy, we would express the desire that in our various Meetings they may be cheered by the counsel and assistance of Friends; and that they may be enabled, on suitable occasions, to set before those who are brought under their care, the scriptural ground of those

views with regard to worship and ministry which we have always maintained. 1874. P. E.

7. We recognize the great importance of the mission work of various kinds, in which many of our members are engaged, as a branch of the work of the Church which has reference to the propagation of the Gospel amongst the masses around us. Amidst the diversities of operations by the one Spirit, it may well be expected that some of the methods found useful in this field of labour will not be identical with those employed for the edification of persons brought up in the knowledge of the truth. Yet even here the wise and prayerful worker will, under his Lord's teaching and guidance, distinguish between that which may excite the sensibilities without feeding the soul, and that "sincere milk of the word" which is adapted to the newly awakened, "that they may grow thereby." 1878. P. E.

8. The Church of Christ, if true to her allegiance, cannot forget her part in the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." It is the operation of the Spirit of God that prepares and qualifies the instruments who shall fulfil this command. Depending on his guidance, waiting on Him for the renewal of strength, the disciple is found still sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening that he may learn, and learning that he may obey. He humbly places himself at his Lord's disposal; and when he hears the call, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" is prepared to respond, in childlike reverence and love, "Here am I, send me." 1882. P. E.

SECTION III.—EXTRACTS FROM THE EPISTLES OF GEORGE FOX
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITHFULNESS.

1. All Friends everywhere, that have Indians or blacks, you are to preach the Gospel to them and other
All to be diligent in preaching the Gospel. servants if you be true Christians; for the Gospel of salvation was to be preached to every creature under heaven. Christ commands it to his disciples, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." And this is the one baptism with the Spirit into the one body, which plunges down sin and corruption, which have gotten up by disobedience and transgression; for all have been plunged into sin and death from the life; for all died in Adam. All have been subjected by the evil spirit, which hath led them out of the truth into the evil; and therefore they must all be baptized into the death of Christ, and put on Christ, if they have life. And also you must instruct and teach your Indians and negroes and all others how that Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man and gave Himself a ransom for all men, to be testified in due time, and is the propitiation not for the sins of Christians only, but for the sins of the whole world. Therefore you are to open the promises of God to the ignorant, and how God would give Christ a covenant, a light to the Gentiles, the heathen, and a new covenant to the house of Israel and the house of Judah, and that He is God's salvation to the ends of the earth. 1679.*

2. All Friends everywhere, to whom God hath given a gift of the ministry, and who use to travel up and
Ministers not to hide their talent. down in the gift of the ministry, do not hide your talent, nor put your light under a bushel; nor cumber yourselves, nor entangle yourselves with the affairs

* George Fox's Epistles, No. 355, p. 427.

of this world. For the natural soldiers are not to cumber themselves with the world, much less the soldiers of Christ, who are not of this world. Therefore stir up the gift of God in you, improve it, and do not sit down, Demas-like, and embrace this present world. Be valiant for God's truth upon the earth, and spread it abroad in the daylight of Christ. As able ministers of the Spirit, sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit ye may reap everlasting life. Go on in the Spirit, ploughing with it in the purifying hope, and threshing with the power and Spirit of God. 1690.*

3. Dear Friends and brethren, ministers, exhorters and admonishers, that are gone into America and the islands thereaway, stir up the gift of God in you and the pure mind, and improve your talents. Let your light shine among the Indians, the blacks and the whites, that ye may answer the truth in them and bring them to their standard and ensign that God hath set up, Christ Jesus. For from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, God's name shall be great among the Gentiles. Have salt in yourselves that ye may be the salt of the earth, that ye may salt it; that it may be preserved from corruption. And all grow in the faith and grace of Christ, that ye may not be like dwarfs. And, Friends, be not negligent, but keep up your Negroes' Meetings and your family Meetings, and have Meetings with the Indian kings, and their councils and subjects everywhere, and with others: and bring them all to the baptizing and circumcising Spirit, by which they may know God and worship Him. And all take heed of sitting down in the earth, and having your minds in the earthly things, coveting and striving for the earth: for to be carnally minded brings death, and covetousness is idolatry. Be awakened to righteousness, and keep

* George Fox's Journal, First ed., 1634, p. 609.

awakened; for the enemy soweth his tares while men and women sleep in carelessness and security. Therefore so many slothful ones go in their filthy rags, and have not the fine linen, the righteousness of Christ; but are straggling, and ploughing with their ox and their ass,* in their woollen and linen garments,—mixed stuff;—and drinking of the dregs of their old bottle, and eating the sour leavened bread, which makes their hearts burn one against another. But all are to keep the Feast of Christ our Passover with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. This unleavened bread of life from heaven makes all hearts and souls glad and joyful and lightsome and cheerful, to serve and love God, and to love and serve one another in the peaceable truth, and to keep in the unity of God's Spirit which is the bond of peace. In this love and peace God Almighty keep all his people, and make them valiant for his Truth upon the earth, to spread it abroad both in doctrine and in good life and conversation; Amen. All the members of Christ have need one of another. The foot hath need of the hand, and the hand hath need of the foot; the ear hath need of the eye, and the eye of the ear. So that all the members are serviceable in the body of which Christ is the Head; and the Head sees their service. Therefore let none despise the least member. And have a care to keep down that greedy earthly mind, that coveteth after the riches and things of this world, and so lose the kingdom of God, that is everlasting.† 1690.

* See Deut. xxii. 10, 11.

† George Fox's Journal, under date 11th of 10th month (now 12th), 1690, pp. 610, 611. He died on the 13th of the following month.

CHAPTER V.

LOVE AND UNITY.

SECTION I.—Love One towards Another.

„ II.—Love and Unity in the Church.

SECTION I.—LOVE ONE TOWARDS ANOTHER.

1. DEAR Friends, the prosperity of truth, the increase of love, unity and peace amongst all Friends, in their respective Meetings and in general, is greatly desired by us; and that every one watch against and shut out all occasions of offences, contentions, and divisions, and stop all whisperings, tale-bearing, back-biting and evil-speaking tending thereunto. Be kind and tender-hearted one to another, and earnestly labour for universal love, union, and peace, in all the churches of Christ. 1689. P. E.

Occasions of
offence to be
avoided.

2. Where any hath received offence from another, let him first speak privately to the party concerned, and endeavour reconciliation between themselves; and not to whisper or aggravate matters against others behind their backs, to the making of parties, and to the widening of the breach. 1692. P. E.

Private
conference.

3. If you hear a report to the disadvantage of a Friend, be careful not to report it again, but go to the person of whom the report is, and inquire if it be true or not; and if it be true, then deal with such person for it according to the doctrine of Christ; but if false, then

Against
repeating
reports.

endeavour, as much as in you lies, to stop such report. 1719. P. E.

4. Among the Gospel precepts we find nothing more The duty of love. strongly and frequently recommended to the primitive believers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles, than that they should love one another; and as we are sensible that nothing will more contribute to the peace and peosperity of the Church than a due regard to this advice, so we earnestly desire that it may be the care and concern of all Friends everywhere to dwell therein; and in the unity of the Holy Spirit to maintain love, concord and peace, in and among all the churches of Christ. 1730. P. E.

5. From love to Christ arises that stream of love to the Love to Christ, the true spring of love to the brethren. brotherhood which, if suffered to flow in our hearts with unobstructed course, would bear away all malice and guile, and cause all complaints of tale-bearing and detraction to cease in our borders. O the precious care that attends the mind in which Christian charity is become habitual! "Charity," saith the apostle, "hopeth all things." It divulges not the faults of others, because in its unbounded hope it desires their removal without exposure. For the mind in which it dwells ascribes its own preservation and the cleansing of its former sins to the unbounded love of God in Christ Jesus; and it prays that all may partake of the same benefit. How opposite that disposition which delights to report evil, and to accuse! Shun it, dear friends, as the poison of asps. The sacred writings emphatically denominate the great adversary of mankind by the name of accuser of the brethren. "Follow," therefore, "peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." 1804. P. E.

6. Friends, seek peace and pursue it. Ye are called to love. O that the smallest germ of enmity might be eradicated from our inclosure! And verily there is a soil in which it cannot live, but naturally withers and dies. This soil is Christian humility; a state highly becoming and indispensable for a being who depends continually on the favour of his Lord; a state in which, of all others, he can most acceptably approach his presence; and which naturally conducts frail man to love and compassion for the companions of his frailty and poverty, yet his fellow-partakers of the offered riches of the Gospel. 1805. P. E.

7. To be "made perfect in love" is a high state of Christian excellence, and not attainable but by the sacrifice of selfish passions. No degree of resentment can consist with this state. Some persons are apt to profess that they can forgive those whom they suppose to have injured them, when such are brought to know and acknowledge their fault. But that is little else than a disguised pride, seeking for superiority. The love which Christ commanded to his Church goes further than that. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." And how did the Lord love the world? Let the apostle answer: "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And, Friends, mark and remember his gracious dying words, when, praying for his very persecutors, He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." How can we expect access for our prayers at the throne of grace if we harbour any ill-will to our fellow-travellers towards immortality? Let us hear again the Saviour of men: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any." He doth not allow time for seeing the injuring person become submissive; but—*Standing, forgive*: for, "if ye do not for-

give, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." O the excellence of Christian love and of the temper of forgiveness! 1806. P. E.

8. Let Friends be prompt in undertaking, and prudent in executing, the blessed office of peacemaker. We believe that the patient endeavours of faithful Friends will be generally crowned with success, in proportion as their own minds are seeking to Jesus for assistance in performing an office on which He has pronounced his blessing; and in endeavouring to lead the minds of contending persons to a sense of the absolute necessity for all true disciples to live in peace one with another, and to forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them. 1812. P. E.

9. As the love of God prevails, it leads us to love one another; but how often does the enemy of man's happiness endeavour to scatter and divide. We therefore press it upon every one to examine whether he is distinguished by this badge of discipleship. Maintain that charity which suffereth long, and is kind. Put the best construction upon the conduct and opinions one of another which circumstances will warrant. Take heed that the enemy produce no dissensions among you; that nothing like a party spirit be ever suffered to prevail. Let each be tender of the reputation of his brother, and be earnest to possess the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Watch over one another for good, but not for evil; and whilst not blind to the faults or false views of others, be especially careful not to make them a topic of common conversation. And in those cases in which it may be necessary to disclose the failings of others, be well satisfied as to the purity of your own motives, before making them the subject of even confidential communication, whether verbally or by letter.

How beautifully are the origin, the motive, and the effect of love set forth by the apostle John in the fourth chapter of his first epistle. Meditate again and again upon the comprehensive nature of this heavenly virtue, as there described. 1834. P. E.

10. How can they, whose only hope is in the Lord's mercy, indulge in hard and unforgiving thoughts towards a brother or a sister? It may be that thou hast just ground for offence. Is thy brother's trespass against thee any warrant for thy own disobedience? Consider how "exceeding broad" is the "new commandment" of thy Lord: "Love one another, as I have loved you." Wait not until thy brother be reconciled unto thee, or until he shall make the first overture. Be thyself the first to seek reconciliation, and to prove that thou art honestly desirous to submit thyself to the government of the Prince of Peace. 1872. P. E.

11. Christ died for us even when we were enemies: He has followed us by his Spirit in our many wanderings: He has borne with us in long-suffering pity: and if we hope to be forgiven, we must also forgive one another. He who yields to a suspicious and unforgiving spirit is led on to imagine things against his brother that are exaggerated, or even false. But love suffereth long and is kind. It beareth all things; it hopeth all things; it is not easily provoked; it thinketh no evil. The Christian must cherish this Christ-like disposition, and, laying aside all hard thoughts and all evil speakings, must seek, day by day, to be clothed with meekness, putting on charity as the "bond of perfectness." 1870. P. E.

Hard
thoughts
not to be
indulged.

Forgiveness
the example
of Christ.

SECTION II.—LOVE AND UNITY IN THE CHURCH.

1. The Church is the body of which Christ is the Head. In union with Him the various members are brought into fellowship with each other. Collectively they are one body; individually they are members one of another in Him. They that are truly his are in the Spirit of the Lamb. He gives them of his patience, his meekness and gentleness. He teaches them how to bear and forbear; how to “be subject one to another”; and when and how, in faithfulness to Him, their lowly and longsuffering Lord, they must make concessions to one another, and give up, if need be, something of their own individual freedom for the general good. 1878. P. E.

2. The faith which receives the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour leads us to receive Him also as our King. Where He reigns, self is laid low: the question is not who shall be greatest, but who shall serve Him faithfully. Under the abiding presence of his Spirit, individual subjection to Christ becomes the highest joy; and in this subjection his disciples are clothed with humility, forbearing one another in love. It is here alone that the true liberty is to be found; a liberty not to please ourselves, but in all things to please Him. Each is taught, under the training of the one Master, his true line of service. There is no place for the idler; for there is work for all. Each rejoices in his brother's faithfulness, and jealousies and complainings are excluded. 1882. P. E.

3. Whilst it is at all times the duty of members of the Church faithfully to maintain the Truth, and whilst some of them may rightly feel themselves called upon openly to oppose error, we believe that there is hardly anything more inimical to the growth of vital re-

ligion than indulgence in the spirit of religious controversy. Satan triumphs when he can make the name of Jesus a word of strife and debate among the professed followers of the Lord. If he, our soul's enemy, can but introduce men into his spirit, he cares little how true may be their words. Let us, therefore, each of us mind our own calling by keeping our eye single to the Lord; and then shall we know that "the fruit of the Spirit" will, in the sight of others, be "in all goodness and righteousness and truth," and to ourselves joy and peace. 1846. P. E.

4. How precious is the unity which is known amongst brethren who are made one in Christ. Their characters, their position, their gifts, their services Preciousness of unity in Christ. may greatly differ, but their hearts are one. They have one Father, who is in heaven; they serve one Master, even Christ; and amidst all the diversities of gifts and administrations it is the same Spirit that worketh all in all, dividing to every man severally as He will. We know that to realise these things fully is no small attainment,—that the complete subjection of the human heart and understanding to Divine grace is a great and a deep work. In proportion as this is not accomplished in any, will be the evidence that these are not made perfect in love. Even in the primitive Church the spirit of party and of division was early manifested. There were those who pleaded for an unhallowed liberty, whilst there were others who, with but an incomplete understanding of Divine truth, were ready to make their own narrow conceptions the universal standard, and rigidly to exclude from communion all who were not equally straitened with themselves. May we ever guard against these snares. Watching one over another for good, may our love towards each other be pure and fervent. Bearing in mind the longsuffering and patience which we have ourselves experienced, let us be willing to

exercise all patience and forbearance towards others. And if through unmerited mercy we have been taught to see more clearly, let our growth in knowledge be accompanied by the evidences of a growth in grace, ever remembering that the deepest experience in the things of God is that which brings into and preserves in the deepest humility and the most fervent love. 1857.

CHAPTER VI.

COUNSEL AS TO MARRIAGE.

1. MARRIAGE, being a divine ordinance and a solemn engagement for the term of life, is of great importance to our peace and well-being in this world, and may prove of no small consequence respecting our state in that which is to come. It was designed for the mutual assistance and comfort of both sexes, that they might be meet-helps to each other, both in spirituals and temporals, and that their endeavours might be united for the pious and proper education of their children, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and for suitably qualifying them to discharge their duty in their various allotments in the world. May it never be inconsiderately entered into, upon motives inconsistent with the evident intention of that unerring Wisdom by which it was primarily ordained. Marriage implies union and concurrence, as well in spiritual as in temporal concerns. Whilst the parties differ in religious views, they stand disunited in the main point: even that which should increase and confirm their mutual happiness, and render them helps and blessings to each other.

Marriage
a divine
ordinance. ✓

To prevent falling into such engagements, it is requisite to beware of the paths that lead to them;—the sordid interests and the ensnaring friendships of the world, the contaminating pleasures and idle pastimes of earthly minds; the various solicitations and incentives to festivity and dissipation; likewise, especially, too frequent and too familiar converse with

those from whom may arise a danger of entanglement, by their alluring the passions and drawing the affections after them.

For want of due watchfulness, and obedience to the convictions of Divine grace in their consciences, many have wounded their own souls, distressed their Friends, injured their families, and done great disservice to the Church, by these unequal connexions; which have proved an inlet to much degeneracy, and mournfully affected the minds of those who labour under a living concern for the good of all, and the prosperity of Truth upon earth. 1777. P. E.

2. This Meeting is impressed with a sense of the vast influence, either for good or for evil, which marriage exercises on both the temporal and the spiritual condition of man, and earnestly desires that, in the choice of a companion for life, all may seek unto the Lord for his guidance; not allowing any merely exterior advantages to be the primary motive, and bearing in mind that an accordance in religious principles and practice is essential to the perfectness of such a union.

And seeing that the real enjoyment of life is far more effectually secured by contentment, with simple habits, than by a mode of living which entails anxiety or risk, let parents, whilst they exercise a prudent care over the interests of their children, not be unduly anxious to secure worldly advantages for them on entering the marriage state. And we would affectionately encourage our younger members to be satisfied to set out in life in a manner befitting their circumstances; not seeking to imitate, in their style of living, the example of those who possess larger resources. Thus, on the one hand, they will avoid the necessity of unduly deferring their union; and, on the other, be less exposed to the temptation of launching into business beyond their means.

Cautions in entering on marriage.

Simple habits.

Many, we fear, have, under these circumstances, been induced to enter into trade on their own account with borrowed capital, who, had their views been more moderate, might, with greater safety and more real comfort to themselves, have continued, at least for a time, in the employ of others.

Moderate
views.

The solemnization of marriage should in all cases be conducted in the fear of the Lord, and in humble dependence on his blessing. On these occasions, let there not be, either in the attire of the parties themselves or in that of their relatives and friends, any display unbecoming an assembly of Christian worshippers; and may the subsequent proceedings of the marriage day, whilst characterized by cheerful enjoyment, never pass the boundary line of Christian simplicity, moderation, and self-restraint. 1857.

The fear of
the Lord.

3. May no right union be unduly delayed by overmuch carefulness as to a provision for the future. It would be far indeed from our desire to encourage a hasty and ill-advised procedure in this important matter; but we fear that, in the present day of increasing luxury and ease, there may have been a tendency, from considerations of mere worldly prudence, too long to defer unions which, with moderate views and simpler faith, might have been productive of mutual help and joy, spiritual as well as temporal. 1869. P. E.

Against
overmuch
carefulness.

4. In setting out in life, let there be a prudent and Christian care to avoid a scale of living which may minister to luxury or pride, or tend to an increase of worldly care, and thus diminish the power to devote time and money to the service of others for the Lord's sake. 1872.

Avoidance
of luxury.

5. We earnestly advise and exhort all young and unmarried Friends, that they do not make any procedure one with another upon the account of marriage, without first applying to their parents or guardians for their consent and agreement therein. And we also advise that, in the first place, all seriously wait upon the Lord for counsel and clearness before making any procedure with any, in order to marriage; that they may not be led by any forward or uncertain affections in this weighty concern, to their own hurt, the grief of their friends, and the dishonour of Truth. 1690. P. E. 1801. 1833.

6. This Meeting strongly recommends Friends to avoid and discountenance very early proceedings in regard to marriage after the death of husband or wife; esteeming such conduct as tending to the dishonour and reproach of our Christian profession. And in cases of future marriage, let the rights or just expectations of children by a former marriage be carefully respected, and, where necessary, legally secured. 1691. 1833. 1872.

7. Parents are tenderly advised not to make it their first or chief care to obtain for their children large portions or settlements on marriage; but rather to be careful that their children be joined in marriage with persons of religious inclinations, suitable dispositions and temper, sobriety in manners, and diligence in business; and carefully to guard against all mixed marriages, and unequal yoking of their children. 1722. P. E.

8. We think it right to remind our members of the ancient testimony of our Society, that marriage is not a mere civil contract, but a religious act; that it is God's ordinance and not man's; and therefore seeing that the legislature has fully confirmed us in our

privilege of solemnizing marriage according to our own long-established religious usages, we desire that none of our members may be found departing therefrom. We further think it right explicitly to state our judgment, that marriages of our members before the Superintendent Registrar, though not open to the special religious objections connected with marriages by a priest, are nevertheless inconsistent with the good order of our discipline, and with our testimony to the true nature and character of the marriage ordinance. 1848.

9. The subject of the marriage of first cousins has been again seriously considered; and this Meeting ^{Marriage of} concludes to rescind the regulations heretofore ^{first cousins.} existing, disallowing such marriages. In coming to this judgment we would record our strong feeling that such marriages are highly inexpedient, and ought to be, as far as practicable, discouraged amongst us. 1883.

* * For further advices and rules in relation to marriage, see under the head "Marriage," Part III.

CHAPTER VII.

COUNSEL TO PARENTS AND HEADS OF FAMILIES.

1. WE entreat and desire all you dear Friends that are Parents to be faithful to their charge. parents and governors of families, that ye diligently lay to heart your work and calling in your generation for the Lord, and the charge committed to you; not only in being good examples to the younger sort, but also to use your power in your own families in educating your children and servants in modesty, sobriety, and in the fear of God. 1688. P. E.

2. As touching the education of Friends' children, for To neglect no opportunity of instructing their children. which this Meeting hath often found a concern, we think it our duty to recommend unto you, that no opportunity be omitted, nor any endeavours wanting, to instruct them concerning the principles of Truth which we profess. 1717. P. E. 1861.

3. You who are parents of children, labour fervently in To seek heavenly rather than earthly riches. the Spirit, with supplication unto the Lord, that He may give them an inheritance in the Truth, wherein they may be enabled to stand up in their generation after you, to his praise and glory, rather than labour to get great inheritances for them in this world; which have proved a snare and temptation to some to shun the cross and embrace the glory of this present world. But let those to whom God hath given riches take

the apostle's advice, that they "be not highminded, but fear," and trust not in uncertain riches; but "be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate," and therein be good examples to their children. 1725. P. E.

4. Our advice and exhortation is, that all masters of families, parents, guardians and tutors of children would frequently put in practice the calling together of their children and households, to wait upon the Lord in their families; that, receiving wisdom and counsel from Him, they may be enabled seasonably to exhort and encourage them to walk in the way of the Lord, to exercise themselves in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in observing the duties and precepts of holy living therein recommended. 1748. P. E.

5. To all masters and tutors of children, we affectionately address ourselves; that in a particular manner it may be your care to caution, and, as much as in you lies, to guard the youth committed to your charge, against the dangers and allurements of evil communications, and the reading of profane and immoral writings, those powerful engines of Satan; whether they be such as directly tend to defile the affections, or, with a more specious appearance, to subvert the doctrines of Christianity by a presumptuous abuse of human reason, and by vain and subtle disputations, "after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." 1766. P. E.

6. As, next to our own souls, our offspring are the most immediate objects of our care and concern, it is earnestly recommended to all parents and guardians of children, that the most early opportunities be taken, in their tender years, to impress upon them a sense of the Divine Being, his wisdom, power, and omni-

presence, so as to beget a reverent fear of Him in their hearts; and, as their capacities enlarge, to acquaint them with the Holy Scriptures, by frequent and diligent reading therein; instructing them in the great love of God to mankind through Jesus Christ, the work of salvation by Him, and sanctification through his blessed Spirit. For though virtue descendeth not by lineal succession, nor piety by inheritance, yet the Almighty doth graciously regard the sincere endeavours of those parents whose early and constant care is over their offspring for good; who labour to instruct them in the fear of the Lord, and in a humble waiting for, and feeling after, those secret and tender visitations of Divine love, which are afforded for the help and direction of all. 1767. P. E.

7. The habit of a constant attendance of Meetings for Divine Worship forms an important branch of the religious education of our youth; we are therefore desirous of impressing on the minds of those to whom they are entrusted, who themselves may be diligent, to beware how they deprive their children of such opportunities on the week-day. Let not the pressing claims of higher education, now prevalent, be allowed to encroach upon the yet higher claims of religious training; but let parents select wisely such a school or college, as well as place of business, for their children, as may favour the healthiest development of the whole character, religious and moral, as well as intellectual. 1815. P. E. 1883.

8. Parents, as they watch the opening capacities of their beloved offspring, may, during their very early years, when prejudice and worldly temptations present but little obstruction to the work, instil into them the first principles of religion. It is their indispensable duty to seek opportunities for this purpose; that

Importance
of habit of
attending
religious
Meetings.

Early
instruction
in Holy
Scripture.

they may impress upon their children the fear and the love of God, and point their early affections to the blessed Jesus, who laid down his life for them, and who has, in a peculiar manner, called them unto Himself: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." 1818.

9. In the earliest periods of life, much of the care of children rests with mothers, and we desire that in all cases their pious endeavours may be strengthened by the co-operation of the fathers. Fathers and mothers to labour together. The youthful mind is very early susceptible of serious impressions; and we believe that if parents are careful to watch the most favourable opportunities, they may instil religious truths, lay a foundation for correct principles, and give a right bias to the affections, which may be greatly blessed at a future day, The safe ground on which parents can proceed is, so to live, and so to wait before the throne of grace, as to be enabled to pour forth their secret prayers for the blessing of the Most High. 1821. P. E.

10. This Meeting tenderly, affectionately, yet earnestly entreats such as are parents, or have the care of children, that they be very early and firm in Parental firmness necessary and endearing. endeavouring to habituate them to a due subjection of their will; that, having maturely weighed the injunctions which they find necessary to impose, they suffer them not to be disregarded and disobeyed. The habit of obedience, which may thus be induced, will render the relation of parent and child additionally endearing; and as it will prepare the infant mind for a more ready reception of the necessary restraints of the cross, it may be considered as in part preparing the way of the Lord: whilst those who neglect to bend the tender minds of their children to parental authority, and who connive at their early tendencies to hurtful gratifications, are, more or less, making way for the enemy and destroyer. 1822.

11. We affectionately exhort parents, and all who have the care of children and of young persons, constantly to bear in remembrance the great value of a tender conscience ; and to turn their attention to the secret instructions of Divine Grace, reproving for evil, and bringing peace for doing well. Be concerned, dear Friends of this class, early to subject the wills of those entrusted to your charge ; encourage them to fix their affections on things which are eternal ; set before them the necessity of being converted from the evil of their own hearts, and kept clean from the sin which abounds in the world ; impress them with a sense of the holiness and purity of God, and of his righteous law ; instruct them in the invaluable truths of the Bible, and lead them to seek after the practical application of its precepts and doctrines under the influence of the Holy Spirit. By such a course of religious care and Christian instruction, carried on in simple, humble dependence upon God, you will perform the great duty of bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. 1830. P. E.

12. Our sympathy and esteem are peculiarly due to those who are conscientiously occupied in discharging the responsible duties attached to the care of youth. With the right fulfilment of your trust, dear Friends, our hopes of a succeeding generation are intimately connected. Your calling is arduous, but of eminent utility ; and one in which you have abundant opportunity to serve the Lord. You have especial need to seek for the wisdom which is from above ; but if, through heavenly help, you have been made instrumental in establishing correct moral habits and sound religious principles, however limited your sphere, you may hope to partake of the blessing of them " that turn many to righteousness." 1833. P. E.

13. The end of all religious training is to bring the mind under subjection to the will of God, to lead our children unto

Jesus, that through Him they may obtain the forgiveness of sins, and be taught in his school the lessons of his truth and love. How, dear Friends, shall we prosecute this work, if we have not ourselves submitted to the yoke of Christ and been taught of Him ?

Leading our children to Jesus.

We believe that not a few, who have been measurably thus instructed, and who are religiously concerned for the welfare of their families, will do well to look around them and consider whether there be anything in their habits of life, in the indulgences which they allow themselves, in the character of their conversation, in the persons with whom their children have intercourse, or in the books and other publications which are permitted to enter their houses, opposed to the training of their families in a religious life and conversation. Let us not esteem any of these things as insignificant.

Guarding against self-indulgent habits, reading and companionships.

Parents should beware that they do not cherish the seeds of vanity in their offspring, by providing them with ornamental attire, or gratify similar dispositions in themselves, by thus decorating their children even of the tenderest age. The will should be early subjected in the authority of Christian love ; and children accustomed, from their very infancy, to a strict adherence to truth-speaking.

Above all things, seek to impress upon the susceptible minds of our youth, the fear and love of their Creator and Redeemer, and the importance of giving heed to those gentle intimations of his will which are made by the Spirit of Truth upon the youthful heart. 1842.

Truth-speaking, and the fear and love of God.

14. How important to the Church is the influence of the Christian woman. In how many ways does the Christian adorning give additional power and sweetness to all that is attractive and persuasive in her character. To the sister whose heart is consecrated to the

Influence of the Christian woman.

Lord belongs, in the appointment of Him who has ordained the family as the training school of society, that place in her brother's deepest and purest affections, which gives to her example and counsel a heavenly charm, and has often proved a blessing for time and for eternity. And in what language shall we speak of the influence of the wife and the mother? As a living power in the hearts of her husband and children, her language or example seldom fails to be effective. Upon her, to a large extent, devolves the responsible privilege of training her children, in those years when the mind is open to its tenderest and most abiding impressions. In view of the solemn trust involved in the possession of such an influence, our hearts are lifted up in prayer that it may please the Lord so to turn his hand upon our beloved sisters, that, shining more and more in the beauty of holiness, all that is lovely and influential may be employed on behalf of Christ, that He may be served and glorified in all our families. 1864. P. E.

15. It is not on the highly-gifted parent alone that the duty is imposed of training up his children in the fear of God, and in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; it is a charge laid upon every parent; and the sense of our own insufficiency, however deeply felt, will prove no valid plea for neglect, when we are called to account for the trust committed to our keeping. Let none, whilst endeavouring, with single-minded earnestness and in reliance upon higher aid, to discharge this duty, doubt that ability will be granted to them; let them rather believe that they will reap the reward of their efforts in a blessing upon their children and upon themselves. The endearing relation which subsists between parent and child ought surely to awaken in the hearts of parents earnest breathings of spirit, that they may be helped to train their children, even from

All parents
responsible
for their
children's
training.

very early years, in tenderness of conscience, in obedience to the restraints and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and in the love of Christ our Saviour.

How appropriate and how interesting would be the occupation of a few minutes each evening before retiring to rest, and of larger portions of time on First-days, in hearing each child of a family repeat a Scripture text learned during the day, or passages from the psalms and the prophecies, or from the parables and precepts of our Lord. Whilst such exercises would richly store the memory and strengthen the intellect, how many opportunities would they afford to the watchful parent to impart some lesson of Christian practice, or to present some simple view of Divine truth. 1857.

16. Christian fathers and mothers, honour the Lord in your families. Let your lives be a daily confession of Christ in your households. In connection with the family reading of the Scriptures, and the accompanying devotional silence, which we trust will ever be felt to be precious, quench not the gentle drawings of Divine love, prompting the word of exhortation or instruction, or the outpouring of the heart in prayer. Pray with, as well as for your children, watching for opportunities of uniting with them individually in the exercise of this blessed privilege. And seek for ability on these occasions to bring the special needs of each before our loving Father in Heaven. Let none think that their religious concern for their children will be in vain. How often have hearts been lifted up in gratitude and praise in the remembrance of the Christian walk, the prayerful spirit, the faithful counsel, the loving sympathy, of the father or the mother now at rest in Jesus. 1866. P. E. 1883.

17. Of all the influences bestowed by God upon man,

one of the most important and responsible is that of the parent. Filial submission is the first commandment with promise; and the Divine precept to the child involves the obligation on the parent so to walk before his children as to be worthy of the honour and obedience thus enjoined. Be encouraged, dear Friends who are parents, to fulfil this obligation. Pray earnestly and in faith for the wisdom of which you must feel the want. Remember that in entrusting you with children your Father in heaven has devolved upon you the high privilege of nurturing them for Himself. A neglect of your duty towards them is an act of unfaithfulness in this your important stewardship, as well as a betrayal of their best interests. It was, we trust, your desire to enter into the solemn covenant of marriage in the fear of the Lord; and now that He has given you these tokens of his love, may you still walk in his fear, and feel it your privilege and joy to train up your children in his nurture and in his admonition. They partake with you of a fallen nature; and it is your sacred duty to strive, through Divine help, to lead them to Him in whom is plenteous redemption. Be much in prayer on their account. Seek for opportunities of speaking to them with a view to their being brought to the experience of a definite personal interest in Christ as their Saviour; not necessarily in all cases looking for responsive expression. And whilst providing liberal instruction for your children, may you never be drawn aside by the desire for fashionable or merely ornamental accomplishments, from a course of training and education conducive to a useful and honourable life upon earth, and in harmony with the discipline that renders meet for heaven. 1868. P. E. 1869. P. E. 1881. P. E.

18. Based upon the Divine ordinance of marriage, the family is designed, under the influences of faith and love, to be not only the cradle of the Church, but the training-

school both for earth and for heaven. Let fathers and mothers amongst us be faithful to their solemn responsibilities. Their children are given them in trust for the Lord. Natural affection may ordinarily furnish a sufficient stimulus as regards a provision in temporal things; nay, a guard may even be needful that this be kept within due limits. But the privilege of Christian parents is hallowed by yet more blessed obligations. They are called upon diligently to instruct their children in the knowledge of Holy Scripture. It is theirs to bring their children to Jesus that He may bless them; to train them, from their earliest years, in a reverent submission to the inward convictions and guidance of the Holy Spirit; and by their own counsel and example to help them forward in the way to Zion; that so parents and children may rejoice together in Him "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." 1871. P. E.

CHAPTER VIII.

COUNSEL TO THE YOUNG.

1. **STRONG** are our desires for you, beloved young Friends, that you may know the work of the Lord not only Counsel to give themselves to the Lord. to be begun, but to be carried forward in your hearts. Dwell under the power and discipline of the Spirit of the Lord. Give place to no views which would in the least degree weaken your faith in the sacred and all-important doctrines of that salvation which is in Christ. Feeling your own weakness and the limited powers of the human intellect, may you accept these doctrines in reverence of soul, in simplicity, and in godly sincerity. Pray that you may be kept in that humble, dependent state of mind in which the Lord, by his Spirit, gradually unfolds the deep things of his kingdom, and grants a holy settlement in the experience of their reality. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Under a sense of the many temptations which beset your path, earnest is our concern that you may now, in early life, choose the Lord for your portion. Set apart at least a short time daily for private retirement. Seek for the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thus will you escape many trials, and practically realise the truth that "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Let not pleasure, profit, or advancement in life, be your first desire, but be concerned above all things to know your calling and election in Christ to be made sure. 1851. P. E.

2. Beloved youth, guard in an especial manner against the first sacrifices of duty to inclination. If ye curb inordinate desires in their infancy, your victory over future temptations will be the more easy, and through faith in Him that hath loved us and hath overcome, ye will in time be "more than conquerors"; but if ye shrink from the conflict, or resign the victory to the tempter, ye will be despoiled of the armour designed to serve you in future assaults, and may become unable to resist, in your further progress through life, temptations which in the fresh morning of your day ye would have held in abhorrence. 1795. P. E.

3. Many of you, dear youth, are no strangers to the practice of the devotional reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to some we trust it has already been blessed. Allot a portion of each day to read and meditate upon the Sacred Volume in private, steadily directing your minds to Him who alone can open and apply the Scriptures to your spiritual benefit. In these seasons of retirement, enter into a close examination of the state of your own hearts; and, as you may be enabled, pray to the Almighty for preservation from the temptations with which you are encompassed.

Be very careful, we beseech you, not to read publications which openly, or indirectly, inculcate a disbelief in the benefits procured to us by the sufferings and death of Christ, in the divinity of Him our Lord and Saviour, or in the perceptible guidance of his Spirit. 1815. P. E. 1820. P. E.

4. Dear young Friends, earnest have been our desires that you may all not only be professors with us, but by obedience to the Spirit of Christ become real possessors of the Truth as it is in Jesus. We are persuaded that, in the eyes of many amongst you, the Truth

has indeed appeared lovely: why, then, is there not a full surrender to its power and to its convictions? The Lord loveth an early sacrifice. His numberless blessings call for your gratitude and your allegiance; and mournful indeed will be the reflection, should your days be lengthened to advanced age, that you have slighted the mercies of a gracious Creator, that you have preferred the love of the world and its fading pleasures, and that there can be no peaceful retrospect on devotedness to his cause. 1818. P. E.

5. We recommend to such of our young Friends as know and approve what is excellent, and may have been strengthened in some degree to practise it, not to shrink from modestly, yet faithfully counselling their associates in early life, when they may be deviating from the path of duty. A tender caution may be received with peculiar advantage, when those to whom it is given know that their counsellors are still alike subject to the same temptations to which they are exposed. 1827. P. E.

6. The more our young Friends are engaged to dwell in true humility, the more will they evince that respect for age and experience which has ever characterised every well-regulated community, whether civil or religious. It was an injunction to Israel of old, and we regard it as a standing precept, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God." 1835.

7. Our sympathy is awakened for our young men who are sent out as commercial travellers. This occupation renders it highly important to maintain, through holy aid, a firm and Christian course of conduct. The employment leads to the frequenting of inns. The company there met with is often inimical to a growth in

grace, and exposes to intemperance and other vices. When young men are thus from home, we affectionately exhort them to seek the company of Friends, and gratefully to avail themselves of those kind and hospitable attentions which are offered to them. It is very important that their arrangements be such that they can spend the First-day of the week where our Meetings for Worship are held; and that, as far as practicable, they attend also a Mid-week Meeting. 1834. P. E.

8. The circumstances of our beloved young Friends, whether under the shelter of watchful parental And with the care, or exposed to the temptations of the metro-^{young in their special} polis and other large towns, have at this time temptations. had our very serious consideration. We do not forget the temptations of our early life, and especially those incident to our entrance upon general intercourse with the world; they were slippery paths to us, and, with humble thanksgivings to God, we call to mind the tender care of his fatherly providence, the pleadings of his warning voice, and his forbearance towards us. We know that, up to this hour, we have nothing to depend upon but the free mercy of God in Jesus Christ our Lord; but through the aboundings of his grace renewed unto us, we cannot but express our strong solicitude—our prayer—that it may please the Lord to deal graciously with you, dear young Friends; that He may never take his Holy Spirit from you, but deepen and strengthen your convictions of the guilt of sin, its hatefulness in his holy sight, and its certain and awful consequences to the impenitent and unconverted. O that we could induce you duly to appreciate these tokens of our heavenly Father's love, and that nothing may ever tempt you to call in question the Divine origin of those secret checks in the conscience, those pleadings of the Holy Spirit, by which our heavenly Father would draw you to Himself, and make

you rich partakers of that pardon and reconciliation which He grants to his believing and contrite children, through the blessed intercession of our Saviour. Open your hearts to Him that standeth at the door and knocks; suffer his love to prevail; strive to enter in at the strait gate; we press it upon you with the most earnest and tender entreaty. There is much by which many of you are surrounded at the present day, which would draw you away from the humbling discipline of the cross, and induce you to seek an easier path to the kingdom. But the words of our Lord are simple, plain, and full: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life." 1837. P. E. 1883.

9. We tenderly sympathize with those beloved younger Friends, who feel that they are, as it were, passing through the wilderness, and whose souls are often discouraged because of the way. To the young disciple the conflict is at times severe. Temptation is strong, whilst the heart is weak, tremblingly halting between Christ and the world. In straits such as these, may you never yield to the suggestions of the carnal mind. Consult not how far you may safely indulge yourselves, or how nearly you may approximate to the ways and habits of the world. Be in earnest to realise a yet closer and more dependent walk with God. The faith that leads you unto Christ will, as it is exercised, give you the victory, through Him. To our fallen nature the path of the cross has ever been a strait and narrow path; but He who hath appointed it will make it easy, and even full of joy, to them that are led by Him; not by widening it, or changing its course, but by bringing their wills into harmony with it. Gently, and at times very gradually, yet surely, does he accustom them to his yoke, and prepare and strengthen them for the difficulties of the way. In submitting to his training, beloved younger Friends, is true liberty to be

Victory
through con-
flict; true
liberty in
subjection
to Christ.

found. In the service of Christ you will find abundant scope for the right employment of every talent, and, in the enjoyment of his love, your cup will overflow with blessing and praise. 1858. P. E.

10. The present is a day of inquiry and discussion, of bold assertion and varied opinions. How important is it to the young disciple, under such circumstances, to be kept faithful to the teaching and training of his Divine Master. How necessary that he should not mistake the false liberty of the natural will, which is in bondage to its own unrenewed desires, for the true and glorious liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free, and in which his service is their delight. Let no knowledge, no gifts, no merely human acquirements or qualifications, ever be preferred before the humbling operations of Divine grace. It is not they who are ever halting at the threshold of the sanctuary, doubting and questioning, but they who conform to the needful discipline, and who enter in through the appointed means of access, who become prepared to join in the services, and to partake of the inestimable privileges, of the true worshippers of God. 1857.

11. Beloved younger brethren and sisters! may you more and more feel that you are not your own; that you are bought with a price. Where much is given, there, in the great day of final account, will much be required. May all your talents be freely offered unto the Lord, and consecrated to his blessed service. May every crown be cast at the feet of Jesus. Bear in mind that the unfaithfulness or infirmities of others, whatever be their age or station, will furnish no excuse for you. Their mistakes or inconsistencies will not relieve you, as you grow in Christian experience and attainment, from the faithful exercise of all those gifts which it may please the

Bought with
a price;
called to win
an immortal
crown.

Lord in his mercy to bestow upon you, to the help of the Church and to the praise of his great and worthy name. The prize is before you: it is a prize not of earth but of heaven; to be obtained not without conflict, through heartfelt repentance, through the forsaking of sin, through the way of the cross, through the life of faith, looking unto Jesus. Press on towards this prize, we entreat you. Shrink not from the warfare: yield up your hearts unreservedly unto Him who will fight for you, the Captain of your salvation. So shall the crown immortal be yours; so shall you for ever rejoice in God your Saviour, and adore his abundant mercy who hath prepared for those that love Him "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." 1851.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ITS VARIOUS MANIFESTATIONS.

SECTION I.—Walk with God.

- „ II.—Privileges of the First day of the week.
- „ III.—Christian Self-Denial.
 - Division 1. Simplicity and Moderation. 2. Christian Self-denial in its application to the Use of Intoxicating Beverages. 3. Christian Self-denial in its application to Amusements and Recreations. 4. Books and Reading.
- „ IV.—Uprightness and Integrity.
 - Division 1. Business and Trade. 2. Frequent Inspection of Affairs and Early Disclosure of Pecuniary Difficulties. 3. Counsel to those in Insolvent Circumstances. 4. Advice as to the Making of Wills.
- „ V.—On Liberality and Benevolence, and against Covetousness.
- „ VI.—Counsel to Employers.
- „ VII.—Christian Life in Relation to Civil Government.
- „ VIII.—Advice to Emigrants.

SECTION I.—WALK WITH GOD.

1. “God is faithful,” who has called us “unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” With Him, there is bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, strength for the weak, healing for the sick, and life for the dead. Who amongst us, beloved Friends, has not been made a partaker of the offers of his grace?

The call to
a change
of heart.

To which of us has it not been proclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"? For which of us hath Christ not died? And is there one amongst us unacquainted with the inward pleadings of the Holy Spirit, contriting the heart, and graciously inviting to the full acceptance and enjoyment, in the obedience of faith, of the plenteous redemption which is in Christ? May none in anywise shrink from the full surrender of heart unto Him. To be baptized with the Holy Ghost, to experience the circumcision of the heart, is indispensably necessary to membership in the Church of the redeemed. How inestimable is the value, how full of woe is the loss, of the immortal soul. May none, then, be loitering as at the threshold of the sanctuary; prepared, it may be, to rejoice at the entering in of others, without entering in themselves. May none allow the strength and vigour of their days to pass away as though they had no object beyond this transitory life: but may each, in reverence and godly fear, keep continually in remembrance the infinite importance of our present stewardship; and that we are individually called by the most impressive considerations, not to be spectators merely of the Christian race, but to run that race ourselves, if we would, in the end, through unmerited mercy, obtain the incorruptible crown. 1856. P. E.

2. What is the Church, beloved Friends, but the Lord's flock, "which He has purchased with his own blood"? He sought them when they were "as Living membership with the Church of the Redeemed. sheep going astray." He taught them by his Spirit the misery of that state of bondage in which they were held. And in yielding themselves to Him, they have experienced the blessedness of that repentance unto salvation which involves a real change of heart and life; in which evil is forsaken, and Christ is accepted both as a

“Prince and a Saviour.” Convincing them of sin, the Spirit has testified to them of the holiness and the love of God in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The light which enabled them to see their transgressions still reveals, with ever-increasing clearness, the Lamb that was slain. They know that they are not their own; that they are bought with a price; and that they are bound to glorify God in their body and in their spirit, which are God’s.

It is an experience such as this, grounded upon genuine conversion, and sustained by the abiding presence of the Spirit, which gives to the individual believer, ^{Life from} *in* Christ, life and to the Church, their true motive power. ^{Christ, life} *in* Christ, the ^{basis of life} *for* Christ. Without this, our Christianity is but a name; and if we have a name that we live, when we are dead, what doth it profit? Life *from* Christ,—life *in* Christ,—must ever be the basis of life *for* Christ. Life in Christ is a continued abiding in his love. For this we have been created and redeemed; and in this alone can the longings of our immortal souls be satisfied. His love is the one “expulsive power,” divinely ordained to drive out, and to take the place of, the spirit of worldliness. 1883. P. E.

3. May all keep and walk in Christ Jesus, the Sanctuary; for in Him are peace and safety, who destroys the ^{Leading to an} destroyer, the enmity, and adversary. For Christ ^{abiding in} *in* Him the ^{Him the} Sanctuary; ^{Sanctuary;} in whom you have rest and peace. And therefore, whatever storms or tempests may arise within or without, Christ your Sanctuary is over them all, who has all power in heaven and earth given unto Him; and none is able to pluck his lambs and sheep out of his Father’s or his hand, who is the true Shepherd; neither are any able to hurt the hair of your head, except it be permitted for your trial. And therefore rejoice in his power, the Lamb of God who hath the victory

over all, both within and without; He by whom all things were made, and is over all; the first and the last; the Amen. 1683. P. E.

4. It is much upon us to put Friends in remembrance to **To a faithful** keep to the ancient testimony Truth begat in our **testimony** hearts in the beginning, against the spirit of this **against spirit** of the world; world; for which many have suffered cruel mockings, beating, stoning, etc., particularly as to the corrupt fashions, dealings and language of the world, their overreaching, and vain jestings; that the cross of Christ in all things may be kept to, which preserves Friends blameless, and honours the Lord's name and truth in the earth. 1675.

5. In these days of religious liberty, in which our inter-
 And to con- course with those of other Societies is **widely**
 sistency of different from that which obtained in the times of
 conduct; our pious predecessors, it becomes us to be especially
 careful that we do not in any way compromise our ancient
 principles and testimonies. We believe that it is equally
 incumbent on us, as on those who were made instrumental
 in first gathering our Society, to maintain those views and
 practices by which they were distinguished. And we feel
 desirous that, both in the performance of our civil duties
 and in associating with others for objects of benevolence, we
 may all be concerned in no way to forfeit the character of
 consistency, but in all things to adorn the doctrine of God
 our Saviour. It is alike important to our own benefit, and
 to that of the universal Church of Christ, that we do not
 shrink from filling that station in it which Divine Wisdom
 has assigned us, but that in singleness of heart we give
 ourselves up to what it may be our individual duty to
 perform. 1828. P. E.

6. Mighty and, when submitted to, all-prevailing is the work of the Spirit in arousing the soul from its slumbers, in breaking up its false rest, and in bringing to that simple, childlike, yet reverential faith in the Son of God, in which every other confidence is renounced, and He is accepted both as our Saviour and our King.

Herein, beloved Friends, is the true rest of the Christian. Not a rest in indolent quietude, but in delighting in God. In this blessed state his commandments are not grievous: the new man in Christ accepts them with joy as his "heritage for ever," and in the keeping of them great is his reward. May it be our individual concern to know for ourselves this rest. As the attainment of it has been made possible to us only through the infinite love of Christ in offering up Himself a sacrifice for us, "the just for the unjust"; let us ever remember that the same love has inseparably connected the full participation of it with the humbling of the heart to take his yoke upon us and to learn of Him. 1861. P. E.

7. "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children." Keep within the restraints of his Spirit in your outward engagements, and even in pursuing the higher gratifications of intellect or taste. Seek not how near you can approach the world; how much of its care, its business, or its enjoyments you can partake of, without the loss of heaven; but rather, how closely you can follow Christ in the obedience of faith. As this is the guiding principle of action, the walk of the believer, both in private and in public, becomes a continued walk with God. He fulfils the duties of earth, as one who has his citizenship in heaven. He will watch both against the influences of worldly care, and against the seductions of luxury and ease. In his pursuits, in the choice both of his reading and of his companions, in his engagements, whether in the Church or in the world, he will be governed by an

Love to God
an instinct
of the
renewed
nature;

habitual reference to the will of God, towards Whom his heart will turn with the instincts of the renewed nature, as the needle to the pole. 1871. P. E. 1873. P. E.

8. A close walk with God is indispensable both for our individual and our congregational life. In proportion as this is wanting, deadness enters into the Church. Vital religion is no mere negation. It is eminently practical. It is nothing less than the following of God in childlike trust and obedience. Love to Christ and work for Him will leave no room for the world or its spirit. The mind is renewed; the tastes are changed. Our all-wise and loving Father withdraws his children from every unlawful gratification, not for the diminution of their happiness, but that He may give them in Himself and in his service pure and substantial joy. 1881. P. E.

SECTION II.—PRIVILEGES OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

1. Whilst the remembrance of our Creator ought at all times to be present with us, it is our concern that the day more particularly set apart for public worship may be rightly observed. It is no small privilege to be living in a country where much more regard is paid to this duty than in many others; and it highly becomes us to be careful that our example in this respect be consistent with the profession we make to the world.

May all our Friends seriously examine whether the mode of spending that portion of the day, not occupied with the attendance of our Meetings for Worship, is that which is likely to contribute to the eternal interests of the soul; and whether the character both of their pursuits and of their conversation be such as may tend to confirm rather than

to dissipate any religious impression that may have been received.

Many have derived great increase of spiritual strength, both on this and on other days, from private retirement; from reading the Holy Scriptures with minds turned to their Divine Author, in desire that He would bless them to their comfort and edification; and from reading the lives and experience of the Lord's faithful servants.

On this day of the week especially, ought the households of Friends to be assembled for the reading of the Scriptures, and for waiting upon the Lord;—a practice to which we wish particularly to call the attention of those who live in remote and secluded situations. 1817. P. E. 1828. P. E. 1861.

2. We rejoice that so many of our members are engaged in efforts to promote the best interests of their fellow-men in First-day schools and in other ways. ^{Rest needed even for the Christian worker.} May these persevere in a course of devotedness and consistency, knowing that the harvest is hastening on, when there shall be a blessed reaping to them that faint not. Let the language of our Redeemer be their constant watchword: "Without me ye can do nothing."

It is in a feeling of cordial sympathy with the earnest workers that we would affectionately remind them that, even in these labours, the human mind needs rest and refreshment. For this the First day of the week has been mercifully bestowed; and, in a Christianly wise economy of our time and strength, the engagements of that day will be so ordered, as not to frustrate this gracious provision, or to shut out the opportunity either for public worship, or for private retirement and devotional reading.

But let not this hint encourage others to excuse themselves from their right part in these blessed labours. The hours of the working day are numbered, and are at most very few. Every moment that is wasted shortens our only opportunity

for service, and echoes back, as it leaves us, the solemn words, "The night cometh, when no man can work." 1883.

SECTION III.—CHRISTIAN SELF-DENIAL.

Division 1. Simplicity and Moderation.

1. We earnestly desire that Friends everywhere keep under the leadings and guidance of the Spirit of Truth in their outward habits and fashions; not suffering the spirit of the world to get over them, in a lust to be like unto it in things useless and superfluous; lest it prevail upon them, by giving way to it little by little, till it leads them from the simplicity and plainness that become the Gospel; and so from one vain liberty to another, till they come to lose the blessed liberty that is in Christ, into which they were in measure redeemed, and fall back into the bondage of the world's spirit, and grow up into the liberty of the flesh with the lust and concupiscence thereof; and so lose both their name and place in the Truth, as too many have done. 1688. P. E.

2. It is our tender and Christian advice that Friends take care to keep to truth and plainness, in language, habit, deportment, and behaviour; that the simplicity of Truth in these things may not wear out or be lost in our days, nor in those of our posterity; and to avoid pride and immodesty in apparel, and all vain and superfluous fashions of the world. 1691. P. E.

3. It is also our concern earnestly to exhort Friends, both men and women, to watch against the growing sin of pride, and to beware of adorning themselves in a manner at variance with the plainness and simplicity of the Truth we make profession of. O that they

would duly consider that reproof which the Lord, by the mouth of his prophet, pronounced against the haughty daughters of Zion (Isa. iii. 16—24), where he describes even the particularities of their dressings and ornaments, as displeasing to the Lord, and drawing down his judgments upon them. “I will,” saith the apostle Paul, “that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works:” plainly showing that such adornings are contrary to the profession of godliness. The apostle Peter also is very full in his exhortations on this subject: “Whose adorning,” saith he, “let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price; for after this manner in the old time the holy women also who trusted in God adorned themselves.” 1739. P. E.

4. It was in the hearty reception of the government of Christ, and in love to Him and fidelity to his law, that our forefathers, in the light of that Truth which the Lord was pleased so largely to shed upon them, were led to the full testimony which they bore against the flattery, pride, and untruth which have ever so largely insinuated themselves into the established customs and the changing fashions of the world. They were an honest, plain, truth-speaking people; their conduct manifested that they were not of this world; and they believed it right to train up their children in those habits and practices into which the law of Christ had led them. Our present concern is that we may all be brought to follow Christ in the same faithfulness and devotedness of heart. 1842.

The true
ground of
Christian
simplicity.

5. We are apprehensive that a degree of display, of luxury, and of self-indulgence, has crept in amongst us, tending not only to gratify the vain mind, but more or less to benumb the spiritual faculties; and the effect is often not less injurious upon the children of those who, in these particulars, are departing from our testimonies. We fear also that some, who are in moderate, or even in limited circumstances, being led away by a desire to imitate those whose means are more ample, have been induced to set out in life on a scale of expenditure unsuited to their income, and have thereby been led into a course which has ended in ruin; and where this may not have been the result, their time, their strength and their hearts have, in consequence of the efforts to meet such expenditure, been absorbed by the pursuits of business, to a degree detrimental to their religious growth and to their usefulness in the Church. 1849. P. E.

6. How important, in its connexion with the great work of the Holy Spirit, is the duty of cultivating a tender religious susceptibility. Christianity is intended to influence the whole life and conversation. Some of its most precious promises relate to the daily conduct and experience of the believer. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them," saith the Lord. Marvellous condescension! Blessed is he who, in the living sense of it, abides continually in the filial fear of offending God. His tastes and perceptions being renewed from above, he will separate himself from that which the Lord hateth, and which his Spirit reproveth. Faithfulness to the Divine requirements in the varied details of life leads him into nonconformity with the world; and in this nonconformity he is, of necessity, a marked man amongst the worldly or less restrained. It was a deep consciousness of the essentially practical character of true religion that led our forefathers to be distinguished from others. Often and feelingly did they declare that they

affected no singularity, and imposed no merely human restraints; that they had no pleasure in offending their neighbour, and no stoical indifference to personal suffering! but that it was in the exercise of a good conscience towards God and man that they were constrained to differ from others in these respects. Like them, we would plead for conformity unto Christ. The testimony which we receive from Him is to simplicity, truth-speaking and self-denial. These we continue to esteem to be among the distinguishing features of complete, practical Christianity. 1858. P. E.

Division 2. Christian Self-denial in its application to the Use of Intoxicating Beverages.

1. As temperance and moderation are virtues proceeding from true religion, and are of great benefit and advantage, we beseech all to be careful of their conduct and behaviour, abstaining from every "appearance of evil"; and as an excess in drinking has been too prevalent among many of the inhabitants of these nations, we recommend to all Friends a watchful care over themselves, attended with a religious and prudent zeal against a practice so dishonourable and pernicious. 1751. P. E.

2. We desire that all under our name may be cautious of remaining in public-houses after the purpose of business or of refreshment is accomplished. To make them a resort for any other purpose, it never need to be named among a people who profess the practice of Christian sobriety. 1797. P. E.

3. This Meeting has been brought under renewed concern respecting the dreadful evils which result to the community from intemperance, and especially from the use of ardent spirits: and it recommends to Friends individually, seriously to examine what

it is in their power to do towards diminishing this fruitful source of evil. We consider that abstaining from the use of distilled spirits, except for medicinal purposes, would not only preserve many from a snare into which they might otherwise be drawn, but might be highly useful as an example to others more exposed to the temptation; and we believe that those who, from love to God and their neighbour, are willing thus to deny themselves the use of these articles, will find satisfaction therein. 1835.

4. To indulgence in the use of intoxicating liquors, more than to any other cause, must be attributed the fearful amount of sin and misery, of poverty and crime, which exists in our land; and it, at the same time, presents the greatest obstruction, exerted by any single agency, to the moral and religious improvement of our countrymen, and to the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth. We rejoice in witnessing the Christian labours of many of our members in their advocacy and promotion of the cause of temperance; and we cordially desire their encouragement in this good work. The progress and extended benefits of this cause are, we believe, largely dependent upon the influence exerted by professing members of the Christian Church. We would, therefore, affectionately invite all our Friends seriously to ponder the responsibility of their example and influence in regard to this momentous subject, and prayerfully to seek to know what is their individual duty in relation to it. 1867.

5. In contemplating the ravages, moral as well as physical, consequent upon the drinking customs of our country, we have again been introduced into deep religious concern. We attempt not to define the limits of individual duty; but we desire that all our members may be willing, in the fear of the Lord, to take a calm view of

this great subject. In looking at the vast extent of sin, wretchedness, and woe which attends the indulgence in this national habit, we would affectionately urge upon Friends everywhere, prayerfully to consider whether anything in their conduct gives countenance to it, or whether they are doing all that is required of them to counteract it. It is alike the duty and the privilege of the Christian to deny himself for the sake of the fallen or the weak. "Hereby," saith the apostle, "perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." If this be true of our lives, how much more in the giving up of everything in our conduct whereby our brother may stumble, or be offended or made weak. 1870. P. E.

6. Considering the magnitude of the evils resulting from the prevailing drinking customs of society, and the insidious nature of all alcoholic beverages, we wish to press home to every one of our members his individual responsibility. We would affectionately and earnestly appeal to them to consider the ground upon which they stand, both as regards their own personal safety and the necessary effect of their example upon their children, their households and every one in their employ, as well as upon all who come within the sphere of their influence. We are not unmindful that some amongst us, are engaged in the manufacture or sale of intoxicating drinks. These dear Friends may be assured that our exhortations are offered in no harsh or judging spirit. We sympathise with those who have been brought into this business without much choice of their own, or who have inherited it from their predecessors. We doubt not that some who are so circumstanced would gladly be freed from the responsibilities inseparably attached to such a business. We would, with affectionate tenderness, invite

Individual
responsibility.
Encourage-
ment to
relinquish
the trade.

them not only to make their position a matter of prayer, but to watch for the right opportunity to relinquish a trade which, as at present generally carried on, seems fraught with danger to the families and assistants of all concerned. 1874.

Division 3. Christian Self-denial in its application to Amusements and Recreations.

1. The life of the Christian is not a dull and cheerless existence. There are no joys here below to be compared with those of which the renewed soul is permitted to partake, even upon earth, in the faithful service of the Lord. It is not then for the diminution, but for the increase, of their happiness, that we would affectionately invite our dear Friends unreservedly to submit all their pursuits, even those which may be intended as recreations, to the holy restraints and government of the Lord's Spirit. As this is the case, the various duties and enjoyments of the present life will be placed in their true relation to the life to come. The desires, the affections, the very tastes, will be "renewed." The occupations of our leisure hours,—and with many of our dear Friends these make up a large amount in the sum of their responsibilities,—our associations, our reading, our varied engagements of a social or more public nature, will be baptized into the Christian spirit. 1853. P. E.

2. We earnestly beseech our Friends to avoid the foolish and wicked pastimes with which this age aboundeth, particularly balls, gaming-places, horse-races, and play-houses, those nurseries of debauchery and wickedness, the burden and grief of the sober part of other Societies, as well as of our own; things wholly unbecoming a people under the Christian profession, contrary to the tenor of the doctrine of the Gospel, and to the examples of the best men in the earliest ages of the Church. 1739. P. E.

3. This Meeting tenderly advises against the practices of hunting and of shooting for diversion, and other similar recreations; which besides involving the necessity of distressing, for amusement, the creatures of God, so often lead into undesirable associations. 1795. 1883.

On hunting
and shooting
for diversion.

4. It is part of our Christian duty to secure for ourselves and for our children a due measure of bodily exercise, and those opportunities for unbending the mind, without which neither our physical nor our mental faculties can be preserved in a healthy condition. A neglect of this duty may materially lessen our usefulness in life and our service for our Master. There may even be a danger on the part of some lest philanthropic and religious engagements should so exclusively occupy their time and attention as to throw their minds off the true balance, and lessen their power of sympathy with those whom they might largely influence for good. But whilst recognizing the force of these considerations, we are persuaded that the unerring standard of the Gospel is applicable to these things. To keep under the government of Christ under all circumstances is the blessed privilege of the Christian; in realizing which he will be preserved from every snare. 1883.

Duty of
taking
needful
recreation.

5. We have been at this time introduced into much concern, with reference to the well-known testimony of our religious Society against the attendance of places of diversion. Earnest have been our desires that Friends everywhere, and particularly those in younger life, may seriously reflect on the injury, and in many instances the moral ruin, which pursuits of this description bring with them. It is our conviction that, in proportion as the mind is renewed by Divine grace,

Against
attending
places of
diversion.

all these vain amusements will be felt to be inconsistent with the restraints of the Gospel, and incompatible with that quietness and peace of mind which are the portion of the watchful Christian. 1846. P. E.

6. Of the various means of allowable recreation and mental improvement placed within our reach, few call Cautions as travelling. for the exercise of greater circumspection than travelling, especially in foreign countries. In excursions, or in tarrying at watering places, whether at home or abroad, the time may be wasted, and the mind insensibly drawn into habits and associations more or less undesirable or pernicious. It especially behoves the disciple of Christ to be careful, when thus separated from his home associations, to maintain a course of conduct in all things consistent with his profession. He is not warranted in lowering the Christian standard by doing, amongst strangers, that which he would hesitate to do amongst his friends. Nor can he consistently countenance, by his presence or his conformity, either the superstitions or the follies which may prevail around him. And we would encourage Friends, whilst thus absent from home, and deprived of opportunities of meeting with their brethren on the First-day of the week for the purpose of waiting upon the Lord, not to shrink from acting upon their own religious principles; but, at stated times, whether alone or with their companions, to present themselves in reverence of soul before Him. Let them never forget that his all-seeing eye is upon them, and that, in whatever circumstances they may be, the worship that is "in spirit and in truth" is his due. 1853. P. E.

7. To look upon this life as the training-school for heaven, Musical enter- tainments. is at once the Christian's duty and consolation. The sense of his responsibilities and of his dangers is too strong to allow him to court temptation. He has no

time to squander upon trifles. His renewed tastes have no relish for vain or frivolous pursuits. He asks not how near he can approach without danger to the gaieties or amusements of the world. Rather does he seek to know how closely he can follow that Saviour by whom the world is crucified unto him and he unto the world. With these views of the practical effect of the religion of Jesus, we cannot learn without sorrow the increased interest taken by several of our members in musical entertainments. There are amusements (and we consider these performances to be among them) the object of which is principally, if not entirely, the gratification of sense, which possess a fascination sufficient more or less to withdraw the mind from worthier objects, and the pursuit of which almost necessarily distracts the attention from the sober realities of life and the duties of religion. As regards those musical exhibitions in which an attempt is made to combine religion with a certain amount of amusement, it is hard to understand how a truly Christian mind can allow itself to sanction the profanation of the sacred name by attending such performances; in which the most awful events recorded in Holy Scripture are made the subject of professed entertainment to an indiscriminate assembly, many of whom make no pretensions to religion. 1854. P. E. 1860. P. E.

8. Words fail to convey our sense of the importance of realizing the influence of the Spirit of God, in its ^{Frivolous} sanctifying power, upon the habits, the affections, ^{amusements.} and even the tastes. We plead for no mere outward imitation of that which is good, but rather for that conformity to Christ which springs from the renewal of the mind. As the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, the Christian will have within him the true antidote to the love of the world in its varying forms. The relish will be lost for frivolous gratifications, and for amusements that

have no useful object. Therefore, dear Friends, let the limitation of the Lord's Truth be applied, in his fear and love, to all your pursuits, and even to your recreations. To the watchful and loving child the gentlest restraint of the Father's hand or eye has the force of law. In all your occupations and pursuits set the Lord always before you. Have the courage to confess Him wherever you are; and should any kind of reading, of recreation, or of indulgence, that may once have seemed allowable, be found, by experience, to impair the tenderness of your conscience, to obscure your sense of the Divine presence, or to weaken your relish for spiritual things, cut it off and cast it from you. 1864. P. E. 1868. P. E. 1880. P. E.

9. Among other indications of the prevalence among us of the spirit of worldliness, we fear that, in some circles, the theatre, the dance, and the ball-room are not altogether discountenanced. The number may be but small, and yet we know how great is the tendency to spread, even of "a little leaven"; and when we see those of our members, from whom greater firmness might have been expected, sanctioning these things and mixing with the world, apparently in its own spirit, we cannot but tremble for the effect upon our young people. What shall we then say? Will not this short direction suffice for all? —Allow yourselves no indulgence, whether in your habits or pursuits, in your reading, companionships, or recreations, that shall grieve the Holy Spirit, or upon which you cannot ask your heavenly Father's blessing. 1881. P. E.

**Division 4. Christian Self-denial in its application to Books
and Reading.**

1. This Meeting, considering that some in the present age do endeavour, by certain books, to lessen and decry the true faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (even that precious faith once delivered to his saints, which by the mercy of God is also bestowed upon us) doth therefore earnestly advise and exhort all parents, masters and mistresses of families, and guardians of minors, that they prevent, as much as in them lies, their children, servants, and youth under their respective care and tuition, from having or reading books or papers that have any tendency to prejudice the profession of the Christian religion, to create in them the least doubt or question concerning the truth of the Holy Scriptures, or those necessary and saving truths declared in them; lest their minds should be poisoned thereby, and a foundation laid for the greatest evils. 1723. P. E.

2. Books may be regarded as companions; they become associated with our most retired thoughts, and insensibly infuse somewhat of their spirit and character into those who converse with them. It behoves us to exercise a sound discretion as to what publications we admit into our houses; that neither we nor our children may be hurt by that reading which would tend in any degree to leaven our minds into the spirit of the world, and to unfit us for the sober duties of life. The books which we introduce to the young require particular care: they may give a bias to the mind, and materially influence the future character. Some of those which, we fear, find access to our families are calculated to give false views of real life, and to lower that standard of morals which Christianity upholds; and others, though they

may not stimulate evil passions, are adapted to lessen the attachment of our youth to the principles of their education, or even to rob them of their tenderness of conscience, and to alienate them, it may be by slow gradations, from the fear of God. 1839. P. E. 1869. P. E.

3. One feature of our times is the spread of doubt, and even of extreme forms of unbelief. Many minds, eminent in literature and in the successful investigation of natural science, have, in the absorbing pursuit of lower forms of truth, overlooked, doubted, or denied the existence of the higher. The popular reading of the day is more or less imbued with the views of men skilled in negation, some of whom are even zealous in the denial of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. We earnestly desire that our dear Friends may be kept from this evil.

We would caution them against all writings the tendency of which may be to weaken their allegiance to Christ, to create a disesteem or disrelish for Holy Scripture, or in any other way to enfeeble their capacity for engaging with quiet earnestness in the duties of life. And let parents and teachers watch carefully over the books and periodicals introduced into the family, and seek opportunities for directing the minds of the young to the perusal of such of the lives and writings of our faithful Friends, and of others of the Lord's devoted servants, as may instruct and confirm them in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and in a course of heartfelt experience under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. 1869. P. E. 1878. P. E.

4. Dear younger Friends, we feel a lively concern that none of you may be in anywise beguiled from the simplicity which is in Christ; and we would affectionately desire that in your intellectual pursuits you may be guarded against publications, or any other vehicles of opinion, of which there are so many

Danger of
sceptical
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And of writ-
ings overlook-
ing need of
Christian
redemption.

in the present day, in which the deep questions of moral truth are so treated that the natural depravity of man, and the absolute need of redemption, as set forth in the Gospel, are almost, if not altogether, set aside or overlooked. In however captivating a form the opinions thus set forth may appear, and however nearly in some instances they may seem to approach to those glorious views of Gospel freedom which, as a Christian Church, we have ever maintained, we are persuaded that no sound or permanent reformation, either in ourselves or in others, can be expected from them. Depraved and corrupted in the fall, the human heart cannot cleanse itself; and they that would thus work upon it in its unregenerate state, without regard to the great truths of Christian redemption, can do no more than propose the substitution of one mode of selfishness for another. The evil may change its form, but it is not eradicated: the soul, still weary and restless, is drawn no nearer to its God. 1850.

SECTION IV.—UPRIGHTNESS AND INTEGRITY.

Division 1. Business and Trade.

1. Let Friends and brethren in their respective Meetings watch over one another in the love of God and care of the Gospel; particularly admonishing Caution against over-trading. that none trade beyond their ability nor stretch beyond their compass; and that they use few words in their dealings, and keep their word in all things, lest they bring, through their forwardness, dishonour to the precious truth of God. 1675.

2. As it hath pleased God to bring forth a day of liberty and freedom to serve Him, let every one have a care so to use this liberty, as that the name of Strict integrity encouraged. God may be honoured by it; and that no occasion be taken by any, because of the present freedom, to

launch forth into trading and worldly business beyond what they can manage honourably and with reputation; and so that they may keep their word with all men, and that their yea may prove yea indeed, and their nay may be nay indeed. 1688. P. E.

3. It is earnestly desired that the payment of just debts be not delayed, by any professing Truth, beyond the time agreed upon; nor occasion of complaint given to those they deal with by their backwardness of payment where no time is limited; nor any to overcharge themselves with too much trading and commerce, beyond their capacities to discharge with a good conscience towards all men; and that all Friends be very careful not to contract extravagant debts, endangering the wronging of others and their families, which some have done to the grieving the hearts of the upright; nor to break their promises, contracts, or agreements, in their buying or selling, or in any other lawful affairs, to the injuring of themselves and others, occasioning strife and contention, and reproach to Truth and Friends. And it is advised, that all Friends that are entering into trade, or that are in trade, and have not stock sufficient of their own to answer the trade they aim at, be very cautious of running themselves into debt, without advising with some of their experienced Friends. 1692. P. E.

4. We warn all against a most pernicious practice, too much prevailing, which hath often issued in the utter ruin of those concerned therein, viz. that of raising and circulating a fictitious kind of paper-credit, by what are called accommodation bills, with indorsements and acceptances, to give an appearance of value without an intrinsic reality; a practice highly unbecoming that uprightness which ought to appear in every member

of our religious Society; and of which practice we think it our incumbent duty to declare our disapprobation, as absolutely inconsistent with the truth we make profession of. 1771. P. E.

5. We would caution Friends against imprudently entering into joint securities with others; by which many innocent wives and children have been inevitably and unexpectedly involved in ruinous and deplorable circumstances. Let Friends keep strictly on their guard that none, through any specious pretences of rendering acts of friendship to others with safety to themselves, may risk their own peace and reputation and the security of their families. We commend the salutary advice of the wise man to their especial notice and regard: "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?" 1771. P. E.

6. Those who, whilst honestly and diligently endeavouring to provide for their families, have to encounter many difficulties, have a strong claim on the sympathy of their Friends: yet they need not fear, as they continue to place their whole trust in our heavenly Father, but that He will care for them in such a way as He sees meet. But if any are deviating from safe and regular methods of business; if they are carried away by uncertain and hazardous, though plausible, schemes for getting rich; if they yield to a desire rapidly to enlarge their possessions—such are in imminent danger. They cannot justly expect the blessing of the Most High on such pursuits; their spiritual eye becomes dim; and they do not perceive with clearness that light which would enable them to perfect holiness in the fear of God. 1825. P. E.

7. We feel a concern that none of our dear Friends may be

tempted, by the prospect of high rates of interest, to risk their property in hazardous engagements; and that they may be very careful, before making any investment, to ascertain the extent of the responsibility involved, that their peace of mind may not be endangered, or the cause of Truth be evil spoken of. 1849.

8. We would caution our dear Friends how they enter into engagements which may subject them to the influence and example of individuals or bodies of men, whose minds are not under the regulating power of the Truth; lest thereby a worldly standard should be substituted for that true tenderness of conscience which would not only preserve from injustice in dealing, but would lead us, in all things, to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us. 1846. P. E.

9. Our brethren who are employed in agriculture, and those who are engaged in the various branches of trade, claim our sympathy. They may be much tried by the small profits often resulting from a course of honest industry and diligent attention to business; but it should never be forgotten that there is a standard of sterling integrity set before us in the New Testament, which the Christian trader should always keep in view. As this is the case, he will be honourable and just in his transactions; he will have a true support under all his difficulties, and he may ask the blessing of the Lord on his efforts to "provide things honest in the sight of all men." As he is concerned that his wants may be few, that his affection may be set on things above, and that he may not be ensnared by the love of money, he will escape many a bitter pang and many an anxious toil. 1851. P. E.

10. In the Divine economy diligence in business is, in most cases, necessary for the supply of our ordinary wants.

And it is the great privilege of the Christian to feel that in the midst of earthly duty, however at times wearisome and perplexing, he may cast all his care upon his Father in heaven, and humbly rely upon his help and blessing. Yet we desire to give a watchword, which, often as it has been repeated, is still applicable to all—"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." How great are the anxieties of those who spread their sails too wide upon the sea of commerce; how bitter the distress which attends the wreck of their earthly hopes. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; redeeming the time." Let those who are setting out in life be assured that no outward condition is more happy or blessed than that in which the desires, bounded by the Divine will, are content with moderation, satisfied with that which the Lord provides. .1865. P. E.

Danger of worldly entanglements, and safety of holy moderation.

11. In the recollection of the many solemn warnings of the past, we would bid all beware of that spirit which "hasteth to be rich," and which so often leads those who give way to it, to trade beyond their ability, to the great hurt of themselves and their families, and to the grievous injury of others. Even where speculations may appear outwardly successful, how injurious to the Christian life is the over-burdening of the heart with worldly cares. Be upon the watch to know the right time for retiring from business. In these, and in all other things, seek, both for yourselves and for your children, to be limited by the will of God. 1872. P. E.

Watch right time for retiring from business.

12. Our sympathy is awakened for those who may be struggling under burdens little known save unto the Searcher of hearts; with whom the anxieties of business, the care of maintaining a family, the weight of worldly engagements, are felt as a heavy load. Dear Friends, your Father in heaven knoweth all your need. He never designed that you should bear your burdens

Sympathy with those in struggling circumstances.

unaided of Him. Commit your way unto Him in humble trust. How appropriate is the prayer, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on Thee." "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him," that He may guide you by his counsel, and that you may receive from Him your daily portion according to your need. Let care never prevail over faith. Though some of you may think that you can do but little for your Lord, He is honoured in a course of daily submission, of patient continuance in well-doing, and of that thankful trust in which the promise is applied, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." 1869. P. E.

Division 2. On a frequent Inspection of Affairs and early Disclosure of Pecuniary Difficulties.

1. We particularly advise young persons to be cautious not to enter too hastily into business, and, from Caution as to the time of their being thus engaged, to be very hasty entering careful to make themselves well acquainted with into business. their annual income and expenditure. This would be greatly facilitated by their early adopting, and regularly pursuing, a clear and methodical system of keeping their accounts, in regard both to trade and domestic expenses. 1826.

2. It is earnestly recommended, that Friends frequently inspect the state of their affairs, and, if reverses Frequent should occur, ascertain and know for themselves inspection of that they are fully justified, as honest, upright affairs, and men, in going on with their business. Such an keeping clear examination would be greatly facilitated by all being very accounts. careful to keep clear accounts; that whether they be taken off by death, or whether it be needful to exhibit those accounts to others, the same may appear perspicuous and intelligible.

And we would affectionately encourage Friends who find themselves in embarrassed, or even in doubtful circumstances, to disclose their affairs to men of upright character, in

whom they can confide. Such a timely procedure would, we believe, often save the reputation of individuals, call forth the respect and compassion of their creditors, and prevent the keen sufferings of tender wives and innocent children, and such reproach as, in some instances, has been brought upon our high profession. 1782. 1819.

3. Those who hold the property of others (and this may be said to be the case more or less with most who are engaged in trade) are not warranted in neglecting to inform themselves from time to time of the real situation of their affairs. If men conceal from their nearest connexions in life a knowledge of the actual state of their property, they may deprive themselves of salutary counsel and of a kind participation in trouble; family expenses may be incurred, and subsequent distress may ensue, which might have been avoided. 1826.

Early disclosure of difficulties.

4. Friends in struggling or embarrassed circumstances are cautioned to be particularly careful not to pay one creditor in preference to another. 1782.

Against fraudulent preference.

Division 3. Counsel to those in Insolvent Circumstances.

1. It is the sense and judgment of this Meeting, if any fall short of paying their just debts, and a composition be made with their creditors to accept of a part instead of the whole, that, notwithstanding the parties may be legally discharged of any obligation to pay the remainder, yet the principle of universal righteousness enjoins full satisfaction to be made, if ever the debtors are of ability. And in order that such may the better retrieve their circumstances, we exhort them to submit to a manner of living in every respect the most conducive to this purpose. 1759. P. E.

Payment of debts in full notwithstanding composition with creditors.

2. For you, dear Friends, who from whatever cause are brought into pecuniary difficulties, and for your families, we feel an earnest desire that you may be preserved from yielding to the peculiar temptations incident to your situation ; that you may be enabled to make a right use of your trials, and that, through the help of the Lord, these trials may work together for your good. We believe that your comfort and peace of mind, and your future success in life, will be materially promoted by a willingness to come down at once to the true level which your altered circumstances require. 1848. P. E.

Advice to live according to altered circumstances.

Division 4. Advice as to the Making of Wills.

1. Knowing how quickly many are removed by death, it is weightily recommended that care be taken in each Monthly Meeting that Friends who have estates to dispose of, by will or otherwise, be advised to make their wills in time of health and strength of judgment ; to prevent the inconveniences, loss and trouble that may fall upon their relations and friends through their dying intestate. Making wills in due time can shorten no man's days, but the omission or delay thereof has proved very injurious to many. 1691. 1695. P. E. 1703. P. E.

2. Recommended, that Friends who have young children do in their wills appoint faithful Friends to be guardians to them till they come to the age of twenty-one years. 1706.

3. Advised, that Friends in making their wills have a strict regard to justice and equity, and be not actuated by caprice and prejudice, to the injury of those who may have a reasonable expectation from their kindred and near connexion ; that none (although occasion may have been given or taken) carry any

Observing justice and equity, and employing skilled advice.

resentment to the grave, remembering that we all stand in need of mercy and forgiveness: also that none postpone making their wills to a sick-bed, an improper season to settle our outward affairs, in the painful struggles of nature, even if we should be favoured with a clear understanding, which ought not to be diverted from a solemn consideration of the approaching awful period of life.

Friends are earnestly recommended to employ persons skilful in law and of good repute to make their wills; as great inconvenience and loss, and sometimes the ruin of families, have happened through the unskilfulness of some who have taken upon them to make wills. They are also tenderly cautioned, in the making of their wills, against undue care as to the future. Long and intricate provisions, as to contingencies which may never arise, often defeat their own ends by arousing undue expectations leading to improvidence; or by creating doubts and dissension amongst those whom the testator may have wished to benefit. Even where arrangements may be legally secure, it is very questionable how far it is, in ordinary cases, consistent with a sound and enlightened judgment, to attempt, by our shortsighted posthumous provisions, to anticipate the wants or responsibilities of those who must succeed us. 1782. 1801. 1883.

Caution
against too
anxious pro-
visions for
future con-
tingencies.

SECTION V.—LIBERALITY AND BENEVOLENCE, AND AGAINST
COVETOUSNESS.

1. Let none strive or covet to be rich in this world, in these changeable things that will pass away, but let your faith stand in the Lord God who changes not, that created all, and gives the increase of all. Be on the watch against an ambitious and covetous spirit, by which many are ensnared in an eager pursuit of earthly enjoyments, the danger of which is thus described

Beware of
covetousness.

by the apostle Paul: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Beware, therefore, dearly beloved, lest you also, being led aside by the love of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, "fall from your own steadfastness." 1676. 1740. P. E.

2. The great deception of mankind is that they look for ^{The deceitful-}happiness where it is not, are ensnared by the ^{ness of riches,}love of the world and the deceitfulness of riches, "which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith," have abused what they should have made good use of, and hurt themselves with the means given for the help of others; the love of money shutting up their hearts from the exercise of charity in proportion to the substance bestowed on them. 1746. P. E.

3. We fear that some of our youth are being trained in ^{Against} habits of expense in attire, furniture and attend- ^{expensive}ance, which are not only inconsistent with the ^{habits.}simplicity of the Gospel, but absorb property which might be better employed in feeding the hungry, and time which might be occupied in visiting and cheering the habitations of human misery. "The trimming of the vain world," said our worthy Elder, William Penn, "would clothe the naked one." 1798. P. E.

4. Cherish a disposition for active benevolence. Let each ^{Active} be concerned to know for himself in what way, ^{benevolence.} consistent with his private and social duties, he may employ his talents for the good of others, and steadily persevere in what he may have rightly undertaken, with a constant reference to the Divine blessing; not with a view

to popularity or ostentation, but in the simple performance of his duty as a wise and faithful servant, who must give an account to his Lord at his coming. 1825. P. E.

5. Let the Christian duty of visiting the sick be timely remembered and practised; it having often left comfort, ease, and sweetness upon the spirits of many, to their very end. 1710. P. E.

Visiting
the sick.

6. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor." It is our desire that we may all of us be kept in that state of watchfulness from day to day, and in that sense of our responsibility to God, in which we may be enabled to ascertain whether a due portion of our time, our sympathies, and our substance is devoted to the great duty of visiting the poor in our respective neighbourhoods, to the inspection of their condition, and to the relief of their wants. Let our dear young Friends consider whether a larger portion of their time, of the means they may have at their disposal, and of that which they could spare from the superfluities of life, might not be acceptably devoted to this object. The support of institutions whose object is the relief of human suffering, however important, should not be substituted for the personal visiting of the poor in their own habitations, and the administering to their wants. 1844. P. E.

The duty of
considering
the poor.

7. The Christian is to abstain from costly and worldly amusements. Restrained from a vain, a self-indulgent, or an imprudent expenditure, he will be preserved from parsimony and the snare of accumulating property to his own and his children's hurt. He will feel it a religious duty to keep down accumulation, by a course of wise and large-hearted beneficence. Remember, dear Friends, that you are but stewards. Seek clearly to discern how much of your income, or of your property, you ought to spare, and in what manner it may be well and wisely distributed for the good of others. Some

Accumulation
to be kept
down by wise
beneficence.

of you are entrusted with large possessions. May you seek for large supplies of grace and of heavenly wisdom. Leave it not to your successors to distribute that which you ought to dispense yourselves. Let all, whatever be their circumstances, cultivate, from early years, the spirit of true liberality, according to their means. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." Let nothing be given to self or to the world which ought to be given to Him. Neglect no opportunity of doing good, seeing that "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." 1849. P. E. 1870. P. E. 1872. P. E. 1877. P. E.

8. Habits of industry and thrift, important as they are in themselves, obviously tend to an increase of worldly possessions, and lead without great watchfulness to undue accumulation, which, in its turn, is apt to foster ease and self-indulgence, ending, in so many cases, in spiritual lethargy and death. Nor does the temptation arise only from the "deceitfulness of riches." "The care of this world," with its distrust, unthankfulness and anxious forebodings, is a canker-worm that eats into the very vitals of the soul, whilst to all, of every age and class, the friendships, the pursuits and the allurements of the world offer themselves in many a captivating form; and, where the mind has been more or less cultivated, under many a specious guise of taste and refinement. For all these things the love of Christ, producing love to Him, is the only efficient corrective. This love, unselfish, large-hearted and spiritually wise, sheds its heavenly radiance upon all the circumstances in which the child of the Lord can be placed. It leads him always to give the precedence to the things of the kingdom, and enables him, in the necessary attention to the affairs of this life, to keep within the limitations of his Father's will. It is this which preserves him in spiritual health, quick of understanding in

Love of money and worldly care to be counter-acted by love to Christ.

the fear of the Lord, and tenderly susceptible to the motions of his Spirit. He knows that he has nothing which he has not received; and, as a faithful steward, he dares not to use as his own that which has been given him in trust for his Master. 1883. P. E.

9. The love of money is apt to increase almost imperceptibly. That which was at first laboured after under the pressure of necessary duty may, without great watchfulness, steal upon the affections, and gradually withdraw the heart from God. The danger depends not upon how much a man has, but upon how much his heart is set upon what he has, and upon accumulating more. The trafficker in hundreds may be no less involved in the spirit of the world than the trafficker in thousands. Therefore watch, dear Friends, we entreat you not only in the beginning, but in the midst of your active career, yea, even to the very end of life, lest you reap from earthly care nought but vanity and vexation of spirit, or sink at last into the grave weary and oppressed, laden as with thick clay. In all your business engagements, whether in smaller or larger concerns, as individuals or as partners with others, keep within the restraints of a tender and enlightened conscience, quick to discern where the desire to serve the Lord in all things ceases, and the service of self begins. Seek to have your hearts raised above the world, that you may live as strangers and pilgrims upon earth. May wealth or position never be your object in life. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Watch carefully, lest that which may have been originally Christian prudence degenerate into the habit and the love of accumulation. Guard against an enfeebling indulgence even in lawful things. Encourage a spirit of Christian bountifulness. Let them that have but little to give, give that little cheerfully according to their ability; and let those to whom a

larger stewardship has been committed, be largely liberal in proportion to their means. 1858. P. E. 1869. P. E.

SECTION VI.—COUNSEL TO EMPLOYERS.

1. A religious care is recommended toward our servants ;
 Religious interest in servants. that all appearance of pride, idleness, and vain conversation in them may be discouraged, and that they may be exhorted to attend public worship, and have a sense of God's love upon their spirits, and therein partake of the sweetness of Truth ; and, in the discharge of their duty to God and to their masters and mistresses, know peace in themselves. 1718. 1861.

2. We earnestly entreat that it may be the constant care of all masters and mistresses properly to teach,
 For whom account must be rendered. hath placed under them for their help, direction, and preservation, and for whom an account must be rendered ; bringing them up in the fear of the Lord. 1760. P. E.

3. May those who employ servants, whether professing with us or not, sympathize with them in their labours, delight to render them happy, and seek for that disposition that can lead them along as fellow-travellers in the road to the city of God. Various are the means by which this may be attempted. The principal one certainly is, the keeping of the mind attentive to the discoveries of Truth ; and we desire that servants may be made partakers of the benefits resulting from the practice of reading the Scriptures in the family, and from opportunities of religious retirement. 1805. P. E. 1883.

4. Our solicitude has at this time been awakened for our

young men employed as travellers in business. The temptations to which they are often unavoidably subjected, have tended to draw aside some from that simplicity, that purity of heart and thought, that strict morality, which Christianity requires. We would submit to the serious consideration of parents and employers, the extreme danger of sending forth into such service any young persons whose religious principles and habits are not fixed; and we would encourage Friends in different places, where those in this line of employment may travel, to continue to extend to them a kind and hospitable notice. 1816. P. E.

5. This Meeting has been impressed with the importance of the exercise of a due care towards young persons who are taken as apprentices by Friends. It may be thought that an additional responsibility attaches to the taking of members of our Society in that station, or as shopmen or servants. But this Meeting thinks that if, from a sincere desire for the welfare of such individuals, Friends were willing to give a preference to our own members, a real satisfaction would arise from it; and let all who fill the station of master exercise a moral and religious care over those who are employed in their service.

We are comforted in the persuasion that the care and instruction which many in early life have received in our public schools have been a blessing to them, and we are anxious that both their employers and other Friends in the Meetings in which these and other young persons reside, may watch over them for good, and be willing in various ways to show an affectionate interest in their comfort and welfare. A few kind expressions arising from a solicitude for their moral and spiritual good, offered in love as opportunities occur, may have more effect than is at the time apprehended. 1828.

6. This Meeting recommends Friends who have the charge of servants and apprentices to make such domestic arrangements as may enable them to attend public worship duly and punctually, and to promote the employment by them of the portion not so occupied of the First-day of the week, in a manner becoming the professors of the Christian name. They are also encouraged, as far as practicable, to arrange opportunities for their Christian instruction. 1833. 1870. P. E.

Arranging for attendance of public worship and for religious instruction.

SECTION VII.—CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ITS RELATION TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

1. Advised to walk wisely and circumspectly towards all men, in the peaceable spirit of Christ Jesus, giving no offence or occasion to those in outward government, nor way to any controversies, heats, or distractions of this world, about the kingdoms thereof; but to pray for the good of all, and submit all to that Divine power and wisdom which rules over the kingdoms of men. 1689. P. E.

Walk circumspectly in Christ's peaceable spirit.

2. The corrupt and immoral practices which have frequently attended public elections are a scandal to the Christian name, and would be very reproachful to any of our profession. We know how often drunkenness, riot and confusion have characterised these contests; and we trust that Friends will not only keep themselves unspotted from such contamination, but will give the whole weight of their example and influence to discourage and, if possible, to put an end to these disgraceful proceedings. 1774. 1790. 1883.

Disorders at elections.

3. We have ever maintained that it is our duty to obey

all the enactments of civil government, except those by which our allegiance to God is interfered with.

We owe much to its blessings; through it we enjoy liberty and protection in connexion with law and order; and, whilst bound by our sense of religious conviction not to comply with those requisitions which violate our Christian principles, we desire ever to be found amongst those who are "quiet in the land"; a condition favourable to true Christian patriotism, and in which services highly valuable and useful may be rendered to the community. 1843. P. E.

Subjection
to civil
government
where con-
science not
infringed.

4. The position of our members in connexion with the laws which have rendered them eligible for civil offices, from which they have long been excluded, has excited our concern. We are not about to discourage any one from taking his proper share in those services which, as a member of the community, he may be rightly called to perform, and which involve no compromise of our Christian principles. But we desire that, when the opportunity of choice is afforded, our dear Friends may seriously consider the responsibilities which they are required to take upon themselves, and the temptations to which they may be exposed. Do not satisfy yourselves, dear Friends, that it is merely lawful; but also ascertain whether it is for you expedient. Beware lest you be influenced by any other motives than those which will bear the test of Christian principle acting on an enlightened conscience.

Advice as to
civil offices.

And let those who enter on any public office be concerned, in the first place, to fulfil its duties in the fear of the Lord, seeking for his help, and diligently and faithfully performing the trust reposed in them, as those who have to render an account, not to man only, but to God. We desire that our dear Friends may, on these occasions, support in simplicity and fidelity all those testimonies which distinguish us from

others; resting, as these testimonies do, on no other foundation than the great principles of Christianity. Fulfil the law of immutable righteousness; uphold the standard of truth-speaking and inflexible integrity in all things; watch over your spirits, that you be not leavened into the spirit of the world; never allow principle to yield to the influence of party combination, but pursue in humility the course of Christian independence. In thus discharging in the Divine fear your duties among men, you will be made rich in the inestimable treasure of a good conscience, be enabled to grow in Christian vigour and experience, and be of those preachers of righteousness who, bringing forth the fruit of the Spirit, do, by their good works, glorify our Father who is in heaven. 1836. 1883.

5. The liability of Friends, in the present state of the law, Counsel as to undertaking magisterial offices. to be called upon to fill magisterial offices, has led us to take a serious review of the character of such offices, and of the nature of the duties connected with them. We continue to entertain a high sense of the just authority of civil magistracy. The nature, however, of some of the duties which, in the present state of the civil and political institutions of our country, are attached to the magisterial office, is such as to demand the prayerful consideration of Friends before undertaking the responsibilities which they involve. May our members be especially watchful that no such undertaking in anywise mars the work of the Lord in their own hearts, or interferes with their true line of service in the Church. 1838. 1847. 1883.

6. We continue to be deeply impressed with the awful On the punishment of death. subject of capital punishment. We believe that, to a very great extent, it fails to produce the effect of deterring from the commission of crime. Is it for fallible man to presume to determine, by his laws

and decisions, the period at which his fellow-man shall cease to exist in this world; when all opportunity for repentance terminates, and when the criminal, however unprepared he may be, is hurried into the presence of the Judge of the whole earth? We commend this solemn subject to the very serious attention of our members, and would encourage them to seek, under the influence of the wisdom which is from above, to promote that close examination of the matter by our countrymen and our rulers, which may so enlighten their understandings, as to hasten the day when the punishment of death shall be wholly abolished. 1818. 1847. 1883. P. E.

SECTION VIII.—ADVICE TO EMIGRANTS.

1. This Meeting has been introduced into feelings of sympathy in behalf of our members who may contemplate emigration, either singly or in families, to distant countries. We strongly recommend our Friends, on all such occasions, to take counsel of their brethren before entering on an undertaking of such importance. We also desire, in much affection, to offer a word of caution to such, that they be not hastily induced by the prospect of outward advantage to engage in a movement so fraught with important consequences, but that in singleness of heart they seek for Divine direction, whereby they may be favoured to know the place of their right allotment, whether at home or abroad. We would especially entreat them to guard against the influence of an impatient or restless spirit, which would lead them, under the pressure of present difficulties or discouragement, to seek in foreign lands those temporal advantages which may not seem to be easily attainable at home, and whereby they may expose themselves and their families to much disadvantage in reference to their religious interests. Many are the dangers

attending a hasty and unadvised movement of this kind: our safety consists in being willing to commit all our ways to the Most High. In regard to this subject, as well as to every other important undertaking connected with the affairs of this life, we desire to remind our dear Friends of the gracious promise to those who seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, even that all things necessary shall be added. 1839.

2. We would entreat those who may establish themselves in newly settled countries to reflect upon the Responsibility towards uncivilized or heathen. responsibility which attaches to them, when they are the neighbours of uncivilized and heathen tribes. It is an awful but indisputable fact, that most settlements of this description, besides dispossessing the natives of their land without equivalent, have hitherto been productive of incalculable injury to the moral and physical condition of the native races; which have been thereby more or less reduced in numbers, and in some instances completely exterminated. Earnestly, therefore, do we desire that all those under our name, who may emigrate to such settlements, may be careful neither directly nor indirectly to inflict injury upon the natives, but that they may, on the contrary, in their whole conduct, exhibit the practical character of that religion which breathes "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men." As this is their aim, they will not only exert themselves to check the evils which are but too generally inflicted by the whites upon their feebler neighbours, but will be solicitous to do their part in endeavouring to diffuse amongst them the blessings of Christianity and civilization; which will prove the best means of preventing their extermination, and of raising them to the full enjoyment of their rights. 1840.

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION I.—Government of Christ in the Church as opposed to Ecclesiastical or Human Assumption.

Division 1. Ecclesiastical Assumption and Claims.

2. Liberty of Conscience. 3. National Fasts and Rejoicings.

„ II.—On Oaths.

„ III.—On War.

„ IV.—On Slavery and the Slave Trade.

„ V.—Burials and Mourning Habits.

SECTION I.—ECCLESIASTICAL ASSUMPTION.

1. WE believe that the refusal of all ecclesiastical demands was laid upon our forefathers as a testimony against the corruptions of the Church, and to the spiritual reign and government of Christ; and that, in the patient endurance of persecution in consequence of this part of their Christian profession, they were evidently owned of their Lord. 1841. P. E.

Testimony
of our
predecessors.

2. Our testimony against tithes and forced maintenance in this Gospel day, being received from Christ our Head and High Priest, is not of our own making or imposing, nor from the tradition of men, but what we have from Him by whose Divine power we were raised up to be a people, and by which we have been preserved to this day; knowing that this ministry and

The
testimony
not ours, but
received
from Christ.

Gospel are free according to his own express command, "Freely ye have received, freely give." 1701. P. E.

3. We have uniformly entertained the belief, on the authority of Holy Scripture, that when, in the fulness of time, according to the all-wise purposes of God, our blessed Lord and Saviour appeared personally upon earth, He introduced a dispensation pure and spiritual in its character. He taught by his own holy example and divine precepts that the ministry of the Gospel is to be without pecuniary remuneration. As the gift is free, the exercise of it is to be free also; the office is to be filled by those only who are called of God by the power of the Holy Spirit—who, in their preaching as well as in their circumspect lives and conversation, are giving proof of this call. The forced maintenance of the ministers of religion is in our view a violation of those great privileges which God, in his wisdom and goodness, bestowed upon the human race when He sent his Son to redeem the world, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to lead and guide mankind into all truth.

Our blessed Lord put an end to that priesthood, and to all those ceremonial usages connected therewith, which were before divinely ordained under the law of Moses. The system of tithes was not in any way instituted by Him our holy Head and High Priest, the great Christian Lawgiver. It had no existence in the purest and earliest ages of his Church, but was gradually introduced, as superstition and apostacy spread over professing Christendom, and was subsequently enforced by legal authority. In thus enforcing, as due "to God and holy Church,"* a tithe upon the produce of the earth and upon the increase of the herds of the field, an attempt was made to uphold and perpetuate a Divine institution appointed only for a time, but which was abrogated by the coming in the flesh of the Lord Jesus

* Statute 27 Henry VIII., c. 20.

Christ. The vesting of power, by the laws of the land, in the king assisted by his council, whereby articles of belief have been framed for the adoption of his subjects, and under which the support of the teachers of these articles is enforced, is in our judgment a procedure at variance with the whole scope and design of the Gospel; and as it violates the rights of private judgment, so it interferes with that responsibility by which man is bound to his Creator. 1832.

4. The blessings and privileges of the Christian dispensation are, in our apprehension, greatly interfered with by the systems of human invention introduced into the worship of God, under which a certain order of men assume a power in the Church inconsistent with the free exercise of those gifts which it may please the Lord to confer. This assumption was one of the earliest, and it continues to be the source of some of the most grievous, corruptions of the professing Church.

We feel truly grateful to Almighty God for that large measure of religious liberty which, after a protracted period of cruel sufferings, has long been afforded to our religious Society. We love our country, and we are, in the largest sense of the term, a Protestant Church. But we believe that by continuing to usurp authority over conscience in the exercise of the civil power, by maintaining established forms of worship, and by obliging men to contribute to those which they conscientiously disapprove, one of the worst features of the apostacy is retained. We think that, with a right sense of the inestimable value of religious truth, no truly conscientious man could join in supporting rites and practices which he believes to be contrary to the law of Christ and to the spirit of his religion; and still less could he impose the maintenance of his own religious opinions and practices upon those who differ from him. True religion undoubtedly leads us to do to others as we would that they should do to us. The

establishment by law of one system of faith and observance as the recognized religion of the state, and a legal provision for the use of all the sects into which a nation may be divided, appear to us to be both unwarranted ; the former as being an assumption of exclusive rule, the latter as treating the great questions of religion as matters of indifference. 1845. P. E. 1861.

5. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." The freedom of Gospel ministry, and the liberty of all the living members of the Christian Church to exercise the gifts bestowed upon them by its Holy Head, have been among the most prominent testimonies of our religious Society. In the fear of God, our early Friends protested against the exercise of authority over conscience in matters between man and his Creator, and against the assumption by any one individual, to act as the sole agent for the people in their assemblies for Divine worship. We believe that this arrangement, by which the conducting of services in a Christian congregation rests with the minister, and the hearers are precluded from the exercise of spiritual gifts in the public worship of God, is a departure from primitive Christianity. In regard to these things, beloved Friends, accept the word of earnest exhortation : "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." 1843. P. E.

6. In withdrawing the Query on the subject of ecclesiastical demands, and in discontinuing the returns of distrains, we think it right to make the following statement. For many years after the passing of the Tithe Commutation Act* our members, as a body, declined the payment of what in its commuted form was, at the time, generally believed by them to be, both in its root and

Testimony to liberty for the exercise of spiritual gifts.

Reiteration of the testimony in withdrawing the Query on ecclesiastical demands.

* Statute 6 and 7 William IV., c. 71, A.D. 1836.

nature, the same as tithe. But there were some in various parts of the country who considered that the character of the impost had been materially changed. This conviction gradually spread; and as the practical working of the Act came to be more and more understood, it became apparent that, in the opinion of many of our members, the Tithe Rent-charge had, by the alteration in the law, assumed the character of a charge upon the land, for the application of which the payer could not be held responsible; and which, in the purchase or hiring of land, was necessarily taken into account in estimating its value. Impressed with these views, a large proportion of our members were brought to the conclusion that they could no longer conscientiously refuse the payment. In this state of things, whilst expressing no judgment upon the question now raised under the altered circumstances, this Meeting believes that the time has arrived when the mode of bearing this testimony must be left to the individual consciences of Friends. At the same time we desire to express our sympathy with those who may still believe that the change in the law has made no change in the character of the impost, and that it is still a payment against which, as regards both its origin and its application, they are bound to protest.

In expressing this judgment we would affectionately remind our members that, how much soever the mode of bearing it may vary, the testimony remains. Our views on the free and immediate operation of the Holy Spirit; on the Presidency of Christ in the Church; on that which constitutes the call and qualification of all true Gospel ministry; and on the worship of God in spirit and in truth, remain unchanged. In the face of so much in professing Churches that tends to create a dependence upon outward ordinances, we desire still to bear an earnest testimony to the *immediateness* of the Saviour's presence and ministration. The hierarchical system, with its ritual and ceremonial, has

no place in the New Testament. The invitation, "Come unto me,—I will give you rest," is free from all priestly intervention. "Whosoever will," may come *immediately* to Him the Almighty Saviour. The work of the ministry of the Gospel is not limited to any particular class or order of men; neither is worship dependent upon the presence of an outward minister. Wherever the two or the three are truly gathered in the name of Christ, there is He "in the midst of them"; and there is a Church. How unsafe is that condition of mind which associates Christian worship with pomp and ceremony; or that can view it as a gorgeous spectacle or an outward show. "God that made the world and all things therein, dwelleth not in temples made with hands." The Most High cannot be worshipped by proxy. He looketh at the heart, and requires heart-service in humble dedication to Him.

The union of the Church with the State derives no support from the New Testament. It involves the intrusion of the secular power into spiritual concerns, which are not within its rightful province. It is an unwarrantable interference with the rights of conscience, and with the prerogative of the great Head of the Christian Church. With these convictions we cannot but earnestly desire that Friends everywhere may continue to bear a faithful and open testimony against hierarchical systems in every form. May they seek to avail themselves of every right opportunity to promote sound Scriptural views on this great subject among their fellow-Christians, and in the world at large; and seek for grace and wisdom to take their part in the winning of souls to Christ, in accordance with those precious principles of his free Gospel which we assuredly believe to be adapted for all. 1875.

CHAPTER X.

(Continued.)

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION II.—LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE.

1. THAT conscience should be free, and that, in matters of religious doctrine and worship, man is accountable only to God, are truths which are plainly declared in the New Testament, and confirmed by the whole scope of the Gospel, and by the example of our Lord and his disciples. The command, "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," points at the true limits of the civil power. The emphatic inquiry of the apostles Peter and John, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye" (put, as it was, as a sufficient reason for disobeying an express command of the Council at Jerusalem to refrain from preaching the then new truths of the Gospel), practically illustrates what those limits are. And, on the other hand, the language of the apostle Paul addressed to the converts in Rome, even under such a prince as Nero, shows plainly that, in purely civil matters, the Christian is to be subject to the civil authorities, and consequently that liberty of conscience is not to be used as an excuse for anything that is inconsistent with our duty to our neighbour, or with our peaceable subjection to law and order in things secular.

Man ac-
countable to
God only in
the things
of God.

How beautiful is the harmony thus set forth between true liberty of conscience in things pertaining to God, and true obedience to the magistrate in things pertaining to civil government. How clear, again, is the evidence furnished by the New Testament and by the conduct of the early Christians, that the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is not of this world, and is not to be advanced by the sword; and that, in matters of faith, we are not to yield our convictions to political authority, nor to shape our conduct by the decisions of the princes of this world; that we are even to suffer wrong and take it patiently; and that the blessing of Him whom we call Master and Lord rests not upon the persecutors, but upon those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. The New Testament gives no warrant to the civil government for inflicting temporal punishments on the professors of one particular creed, in respect only of their religious opinions, or for bestowing, on the like grounds, temporal emoluments on the professors of another.

2. We plead for no license to do wrong: we advocate no weak indulgence to the workings of unbridled imagination or passion: we plead for liberty of conscience toward God. To rule over the conscience, and to command the spiritual allegiance of his creatures, is his high and sacred prerogative. To prohibit by law the doing of that which conscience enjoins as a religious duty, and which in no wise interferes with the just requirements of civil order, is to assume a jurisdiction for which the Supreme Judge has given no warrant under the Gospel: whilst to enforce the performance of services, under the plea of religion, upon those who believe such services to be uncalled for, or for them even positively sinful, must surely be highly offensive to a pure and holy God. In religion every act ought to be free; a forced worship is

plainly a contradiction in terms under that dispensation in which, according to the declaration of our Lord Himself, they that worship the Father “must worship Him in spirit and in truth.” And, in our apprehension, every assembly which is held, with open doors, for the sole purpose of the public worship of God, ought to be free from all interruption or molestation, and is entitled to the protection of the civil power. 1856. 1878.

3. It is our conviction—a conviction which is, we submit, abundantly confirmed by the past history and present condition of Great Britain and of the other nations of Europe—that the thorough maintenance of the principles of true liberty of conscience greatly contributes to the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of nations. It promotes the increase among them of the number of upright and faithful subjects and citizens,—men fearing God and discharging their various duties to his glory, and to the benefit of their country. These are the men who are the real strength of the Government under which they live, and who afford a security to the State which nothing else can equally confer. 1856. 1878.

CHAPTER X.

(Continued.)

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION III.—NATIONAL FASTS AND REJOICINGS.

1. ADVISED, that Friends keep to their wonted example and
Against super- testimony against the superstitious observance
stitious obser- vance of days. of days. 1691. P. E.

2. It is well known that we regard it as a Christian
Days of testimony, to refrain from uniting in many of
thanksgiving. those demonstrations of joy which prevail on
occasions of public rejoicing. They not unfrequently lead
to practices inconsistent with that meek and quiet spirit
which should clothe the disciple of Jesus, and they are
often an inlet to excesses which estrange the mind from
God. It is not in this way that we should manifest our
gratitude for national blessings; but by endeavouring,
through redeeming love and power, to live more and more
in the spirit of the Gospel, and thus to hold out an example
of genuine Christian conduct. 1814. P. E. 1861.

3. We believe that at times the Lord is pleased, in an
National especial manner, to visit nations by his judgments,
fasts. and that they call for deep humiliation before
Him, and for that repentance which includes a real turning
away from all our evil works. This was the great feature
of that memorable fast which obtained the Divine favour for
Nineveh, after the prophet had been sent to pronounce its
destruction. The true and acceptable fast to the Lord was

declared by the prophet Isaiah to be, not the bowing of the head for a day, but the right performance of acts of justice and mercy. How loudly then are we, as Christians, called upon to beware of depending upon any temporary or external performances, and to observe that daily and continual fast, which consists in the obedient homage of the soul to its Almighty Creator and Redeemer. It is the great duty of Christians so to live that, when public calamities visit a nation, their sense of the chastening which is laid upon them may be manifested by a humiliation of soul, under feeling of that constant dependence upon God in which our spiritual strength so greatly consists.

The imposition of religious exercises by the civil government, we conceive to be an infringement of the rights of conscience, and an intrusion on his prerogative whose right it is to rule there. We have thought it right, as a religious Society, to abstain from the observance of days set apart, without a Divine direction, for the religious commemoration of particular events, or for national humiliation under peculiar trials; and when we consider that the orders for such observances in this country are issued under the authority of the Sovereign, as the head of the Church of England, we feel additionally bound, with meekness, to refuse compliance with such orders, and thereby to testify against that usurpation which we believe to be anti-Christian.

Whilst supporting these our views of the liberty of the Gospel, let us be careful to prove, by our conduct and conversation, that we walk in the fear of God, and do indeed believe that He rules in the kingdoms of men. May we increasingly cherish that true love of our country, which would lead us frequently to the throne of grace on its behalf, that so, whilst we cannot lift up the sword in its defence, our prayers and intercessions may ascend availingly to Him in whose hand are the prosperity of nations, and the issues of life and death. 1833. 1851. 1861.

CHAPTER X.

(Continued.)

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION IV.—ON OATHS.

1. ADVISED, that our Christian testimony be faithfully maintained against the burthen and imposition of oaths, according to the express prohibition of Christ, and also of the apostle James : “ Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths ; but I say unto you, Swear not at all ; neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne ; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool ; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King ; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black : but let your communication be, Yea, yea ; Nay, nay ; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.” “ But above all things, my brethren, swear not ; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath ; but let your yea be yea ; and your nay, nay ; lest ye fall into condemnation.” 1693. P. E. 1782.

2. In the year 1833 an Act was passed (3 & 4 William IV., c. 49) giving, in all cases, to the affirmation of Friends the legal force and effect of an oath.* Thus has the testimony of our religious Society against all swearing been, through progressive steps, recognised

* The first Act allowing the affirmation of Friends was the Statute, commonly called the Toleration Act, 1 W. & M., Sess. 1, c. 18, s. 13. This

by the legislature, until at length, in this respect, every obstacle is removed to a full participation with our fellow-countrymen in all civil duties and privileges. We cannot but regard this important result, although not solicited by us, as happily indicating more enlarged and enlightened views than have heretofore prevailed, in regard to Christian liberty and the rights of conscience. 1834. 1861.

3. The following is an extract from the Act referred to:—

“Whereas it is expedient and reasonable that the solemn affirmation of persons of the persuasion of the Extract from people called Quakers, and of Moravians, should St. 3 & 4 be allowed in all cases where an oath is or shall W. IV., c. 49. be required; be it therefore enacted by the King’s most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That every person of the persuasion of the people called Quakers, and every Moravian, be permitted to make his or her solemn affirmation or declaration, instead of taking an oath, in all places and for all purposes whatsoever where an oath is or shall be required, either by the common law or by any Act of Parliament already made or hereafter to be made; which said affirmation or declaration shall be of the same force and effect as if he or she had taken an oath in the usual form; and if any such person making such solemn affirmation or declaration shall be lawfully convicted, wilfully, falsely, and corruptly to have affirmed or declared any matter or thing which, if the same had been in the usual form, would have amounted to wilful and corrupt perjury, he or she shall incur the same penalties and forfeitures as by the laws and statutes of this realm are enacted against persons convicted of wilful and corrupt perjury, any law, statute, or

was afterwards extended by St. 7 & 8 W. III., c. 34; and, the form of affirmation having been simplified by St. 8 Geo. I., c. 6, it was by St. 22 Geo. II., c. 46, made applicable to all cases except criminal cases, and the oaths required for serving on juries, or for bearing any office or place of profit in the Government. The St. 3 & 4 W. IV., c. 49, mentioned in the text, finally made the affirmation of a Friend equivalent to an oath in every case in which an oath can be legally required. Much information as to the earlier efforts on this subject will be found in George Whitehead’s “Christian Progress,” 635—636 and 646—655.

custom to the contrary notwithstanding: Provided always, that every such affirmation or declaration shall be in the words following: (that is to say)

'I, A. B., being one of the people called Quakers [or one of the persuasion of the people called Quakers, or of the United Brethren called Moravians, as the case may be], do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm.'"

4. We entreat that, when any Friend has occasion to make an affirmation, he be very considerate and sure of the truth of what he is about to affirm, remembering that "a false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape," and that the command, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," is equally binding under the Gospel as under the law. They who are called upon to give evidence are reminded that their testimony is required, not as to what they may believe upon the assertion or statement of others, however credible; but as to what they themselves know from their own knowledge. If a due sense of the obligation to truth-speaking adequately rests upon the mind, its effect will be manifest, even in the department of those who are giving evidence.

1834. 1883.

5. The following summary may be found useful by way of information as to the present state of the law upon this subject. By enactments of the legislature subsequent to the Act 3 & 4 William IV., c. 49, above referred to, the right to make an affirmation in lieu of an oath has been extended to persons having formerly been Friends or Moravians; also, in many cases, to any persons who are unwilling from alleged conscientious motives to be sworn, and of the sincerity of whose objection the judge or other person authorised to take an oath is satisfied. The form of affirmation in such a case, under the statute 17 & 18 Vict., c. 125, relating to witnesses in civil proceedings, is as follows:

Cautious as
to giving
evidence.

Summary of
present state
of the law.

“I, A. B., do solemnly, sincerely, and truly affirm and declare that the taking of any oath is, according to my religious belief, unlawful; and I do also solemnly, sincerely, and truly affirm and declare,” etc.

By the statute 31 & 32 Vict., c. 72, which now regulates the form of the oath of allegiance, and of certain official, judicial, and parliamentary oaths therein specified, it is enacted as follows (Sect. 11):

“When an oath is required to be taken under this Act, every person for the time being by law permitted to make a solemn affirmation or declaration instead of taking an oath, may, instead of taking such oath, make a solemn affirmation in the form of the oath hereby appointed, substituting the words ‘solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm,’ for the word ‘swear,’ and omitting the words ‘So help me God.’”

The following schedule of all the unrepealed Acts of Parliament relating to this subject is taken from the 7th edition (1881) of the Index of Statutes prepared by the Statute Law Committee, under Government authority. The letters *E.*, *S.*, and *I.*, denote that the Acts refer to England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively. Acts not so distinguished, refer to the United Kingdom generally.

Affirmation or Declaration in lieu of Oath:—

By Quakers and Moravians	3 & 4 Will. IV., c. 49.
By Quakers in criminal cases in Scotland	S. 9 Geo. IV., c. 29, s. 13.
By Quakers in excise matters	7 & 8 Geo. IV., c. 53, s. 30.
By persons having been Quakers or Moravians	1 & 2 Vict., c. 77
By Separatists	3 & 4 Will. IV., c. 82.
By person objecting from conscientious motives to take an oath:—	
in civil proceedings, England	<i>E.</i> 17 & 18 Vict., c. 125, ss. 20, 21.
” ” Ireland	<i>I.</i> 19 & 20 Vict., c. 102, ss. 23, 24.
in probate proceedings, England	<i>E.</i> 20 & 21 Vict., c. 77, s. 27.
” ” Ireland	<i>I.</i> 20 & 21 Vict., c. 79, s. 32.
in matrimonial causes, England	<i>E.</i> 20 & 21 Vict., c. 85, ss. 49, 50.

in matrimonial causes, Ireland . *I.* 34 & 35 Vict., c. 49, ss. 14, 19.
 in English informations and proceedings at law on revenue side of exchequer, England . *E.* 28 & 29 Vict., c. 104, ss. 22, 35.
 in criminal proceedings, England and Ireland *E.I.* 24 & 25 Vict., c. 66
 in civil or criminal proceedings, Scotland *S.* 28 & 29 Vict., c. 9

By jurors in civil or criminal proceedings, objecting from conscientious motives to take oath; statement thereof in legal proceedings:—

England	{ <i>E.</i> 6 & 7 Vict., c. 85, s. 2. <i>E.</i> 30 & 31 Vict., c. 35, s. 8.
Scotland	<i>S.</i> 31 & 32 Vict., c. 39.
Ireland	{ <i>I.</i> 6 & 7 Vict., c. 85, s. 2. <i>I.</i> 31 & 32 Vict., c. 75.

By persons required to take oath of allegiance, official oath, or judicial oath 31 & 32 Vict., c. 72, s. 11.

Words "oath," "swear," affidavit," in all Acts to include affirmation, declaration, affirming, and declaring 13 & 14 Vict., c. 21, s. 4.

N.B.—The foregoing schedule does not include certain enactments relating to persons objecting to take oaths, or objected to as incompetent to take them, on the ground of want of religious belief. It must also be borne in mind that there are still (speaking in the year 1883) special cases to which the Acts enumerated do not extend, as, for example, the admission to practise as a Solicitor, in which legal effect is not allowed to the affirmation of individuals not being either Friends or Moravians or Separatists, who have a conscientious objection to the taking of an oath.

CHAPTER X.

(Continued.)

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION V.—ON WAR.

1. WE feel bound explicitly to avow our continued unshaken persuasion that all war is utterly incompatible with the plain precepts of our Divine Lord and Lawgiver, and with the whole spirit and tenor of his Gospel; and that no plea of necessity or of policy, however urgent or peculiar, can avail to release either individuals or nations from the paramount allegiance which they owe unto Him who hath said, "Love your enemies." To carry out such a profession consistently is indeed a high attainment, but it should be the aim of every Christian. 1854. P. E.

2. The Christian and truly Scriptural testimony of our religious Society against all war is as precious which are not to us as ever it was. We dare not believe that impracticable. our Lord and Saviour, in enjoining the love of enemies and the forgiveness of injuries, has prescribed for man a series of precepts which are incapable of being carried into practice; or of which the practice is to be postponed till all shall be persuaded to act upon them. We cannot doubt that they are incumbent upon the Christian now; and that we have in the prophetic Scriptures the distinct intimation of their direct application, not only to individuals, but to nations also.

Great indeed must be the change before our fellow-

countrymen generally, and the subjects and citizens of other professedly Christian States, are brought to admit that all war, defensive as well as offensive, is unlawful for the followers of the Lamb: but how is this change to be brought about, unless by faithfulness in word and deed on the part of those who are already convinced in their consciences, that both the precepts and the example of our Lord enjoin an adherence, on the part of his disciples, to the principles and the practice of inviolable peace? 1859. P. E.

3. As it hath pleased the Lord, by the breaking forth of the glorious light of his Gospel, and the shedding abroad of his Holy Spirit, to gather us to be a people to his praise, and to unite us in love, not only one unto another, but to the whole creation of God, by subjecting us to the government of his Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, it behoveth us to hold forth the ensign of the Lamb of God, and, by our patience and peaceable behaviour, to show that we walk in obedience to the example and precepts of our Lord and Master, who hath commanded us to love our enemies, and to do good even to them that hate us. Wherefore, we entreat all who profess themselves members of our Society to be faithful to that ancient testimony, borne by us ever since we were a people, against bearing arms and fighting; that, by a conduct agreeable to our profession, we may demonstrate ourselves to be real followers of the Messiah, the peaceable Saviour, of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end. 1744. P. E.

4. We are sorrowfully affected to find that some Friends have failed in the maintenance of our Christian testimony against wars and fightings, by joining with others to hire substitutes, and, by the payment of money, to exempt themselves from personal service

Faithfulness
to govern-
ment of
Prince of
Peace.

Against pro-
viding sub-
stitutes.

in the militia; a practice inconsistent with our testimony to the reign of the Prince of Peace. 1760.

5. We entreat that, when warlike preparations are making, Friends be watchful lest any be drawn into loans, Against loans or profits in warlike preparations. or arming or letting out their ships or vessels, or otherwise promoting the destruction of the human species. And let all be careful not to seek or accept profit by any concern in the preparations for war. How reproachfully inconsistent would it be, to refuse an active compliance with warlike measures, and, at the same time, to enrich ourselves by the commerce and other circumstances dependent on war. 1790. 1798. P. E.

6. Friends are advised against aiding and assisting in the conveyance of soldiers, their baggage, arms, ammunition or military stores. 1810. 1861. Caution against conveying soldiers.

7. Our testimony against bearing arms is a testimony for the Messiah, of whose reign it is predicted, that Transcendent excellency of peace. "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together." Most, if not all, people admit the transcendent excellency of peace. All who adopt the petition, "Thy kingdom come," pray for its universal establishment. Some people then must begin to fulfil the evangelical promise, and cease to learn war any more. Now, Friends, seeing these things cannot be controverted, how do we long that your whole conversation may be as becometh the Gospel. It is a solemn thing to stand forth to the nation as the advocates of inviolable peace; and our testimony loses its efficacy in proportion to the want of consistency in any amongst us. We are peculiarly called to let our light shine with clearness, on account of the lenity shown us by Government, and the readiness of magistrates to afford us all legal relief under suffering. We can serve our country in no way more availingly, or more acceptably to Him who holds its

prosperity at his disposal, than by contributing, all that in us lies, to increase the number of meek, humble, self-denying Christians.

Guard against placing your dependence on fleets and armies; be peaceable yourselves, in words and actions, and pray to the Father of the universe that He would breathe the spirit of reconciliation into the hearts of his erring and contending creatures. 1804. P. E. 1805. P. E.

8. We hail, as a symptom of the spread of more enlightened International views, many instances in later years in which arbitration. disputes between nations have been settled by arbitration, and not by recourse to the anti-Christian practice of war. May a sense of the wisdom and true policy of arbitration increase, until it shall become the ultimate rule for the determination of such differences. And O! that all nations professing the name of Christ may be brought, by the light of his Spirit, to see that in having recourse to arms to settle disputes, and in gratifying the love of conquest and power, they give occasion for his holy name to be blasphemed by Mahometans and Pagans. 1846. P. E.

9. If war is to be prevented, the spirit from which war Against the war spirit. proceeds must be excluded. As with individuals, so with nations, the beginnings of strife must be watchfully guarded against. To give occasion of offence or jealousy to the governments or to the inhabitants of other countries, whether by imputing evil motives, by needless alarms of invasion, or by anything approaching to a hostile attitude, is inconsistent alike with Christian duty and with true patriotism. May the members of our religious Society be so watchful over their thoughts, their words, and their actions, as not only to be themselves preserved from the contagion of a martial spirit, but to be enabled, by example and by precept, to do their full part towards counteracting it.

We observe with pain the arrangements extensively made in various localities to organize rifle clubs and volunteer corps. Great is the force of example and the seductive influence of companionship; and some who, in their moments of serious reflection, would refuse to take the life of a single fellow-creature even to save their own, may, either through the excitement of emulation or the want of moral courage to withstand a sneer, be tempted to enter into pursuits the object of which is to acquire, for the professed purpose of national defence, dexterity and certainty in the destruction of human life. May our dear young Friends have the courage to resist the temptation; and may they remember that, if herein they faithfully confess their Lord and Master before men, He will sustain them in the hour of trial. 1859. P. E.

10. The whole life and teaching of our Lord and Saviour is one continued testimony against the spirit of war. His words are not to be annulled by the teachings of men. We look with serious apprehension upon the existence and increase of "military centres." How often do they become also centres of demoralization and sin! War, springing from a root of bitterness, polluted alike in its origin and in its object, poisons everything that comes within its influence. The soldier cannot become skilled in the art of destruction, armaments cannot be raised or kept together, battles cannot be fought, multitudes of men cannot be slaughtered, and their souls hurried into eternity, upon Christian principles. We entreat all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to consider the dishonour to his holy name, and the hindrance to the true progress of the Gospel, occasioned by the sanction given by its professors to the military system and spirit. 1872. P. E.

Rifle Clubs
and
Volunteer
Corps.

Protest
against
"military
centres."

War cannot
be carried
on upon
Christian
principles.

11. We continue to uphold the testimony, which we believe to be that of Christ Himself, against all war. To ^{Not ashamed of testimony to Christ.} be ashamed of this testimony would be, in our judgment, to be ashamed of our Lord. We do not believe that He has enjoined what is impracticable, nor that there is any release from the obligation to act out what He has enjoined. In this matter we feel bound to use great plainness of speech, and, in the face of all past and present discouragements, to assert our belief that a time will surely come when the wars of our day will be looked back upon as a barbarism lingering in the midst of assumed civilization and professed Christianity. Meanwhile we hold it to be true patriotism to do all that in us lies towards averting from our beloved country any share in the calamity and guilt of war. 1878. P. E.

CHAPTER X.

(Continued.)

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION VI.—SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

1. It is the sense of this Meeting that the importing, by Friends, of negroes from their native country and relations is not a commendable nor allowed practice, and is therefore censured by this Meeting. 1727.

2. We fervently warn all in profession with us that they be careful to avoid being in any way concerned in reaping the unrighteous profits arising from the iniquitous practice of dealing in negroes and other slaves; whereby, in the original purchase, one man selleth another, as he doth the beast that perisheth, without any better pretensions to a property in him than that of superior force, in direct violation of the Gospel rule which teacheth all to do as they would be done by and to do good unto all; being the reverse of that covetous disposition which furnisheth encouragement to those poor ignorant people to perpetuate their savage wars in order to supply the demands of this most unnatural traffic, whereby great numbers of mankind, free by nature, are subjected to inextricable bondage, and which hath often been observed to fill their possessors with haughtiness, tyranny, luxury, and barbarity, corrupting the minds and debasing the morals of their children, to the unspeakable prejudice of religion and virtue, and to the exclusion of that holy spirit of universal love,

meekness and charity, which is the unchangeable nature and glory of true Christianity. 1758. P. E.

3. We lament the slow progress in this country of the cause of our fellow-men, the oppressed black people, but we do not despair of its success: and we desire Friends may never suffer the cause to cool on their minds, through the delay which the opposition of interested men hath occasioned in this work of justice and mercy; but rather be animated to consider that, the longer the opposition remains, the more necessity there is, on the side of righteousness and benevolence, for steadiness, perseverance, and continued breathing of spirit to the God and Father of all, who formed of one blood all the families of the earth. 1793. P. E.

4. We would express our thankfulness for an event which concerns not us only, but incalculable multitudes of our fellow-creatures, our fellow-possessors of the faculty of reason, our fellow-objects of the redemption which comes by Christ. We scarcely need name the abolition of the slave trade. We view it as one of the most important acts of public, national righteousness, which ever dignified the councils of any government; and our minds have been directed in secret prayer to the Almighty Parent of the universe, that He may be pleased to regard this kingdom for good, and direct its future councils to such further acts of justice and mercy as may promote his glory, in the harmony of his rational creation. 1807. P. E.

5. The bill for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, which was before Parliament when we last met, has passed into a law; and on the first of the Eighth Month, 1834, slavery is to cease in the colonies of Great Britain. Some provisions are attached

to this Act, the insertion of which we regret. We, at the same time, think it right to express our gratitude to God, in that He has been pleased to incline the hearts of our rulers to this act of national justice and mercy. We look back to the faithful, persevering labours of our dear Friends of former days, when, simply following those principles of justice and equity which the Gospel enjoins, they bore their testimony to the unrighteousness of man holding his fellow-man in bondage. To the spread of this view of the subject we attribute, under Divine Providence, the removal of this system of iniquity. It may truly be said to have been hastened in the Lord's time. Such were the singular providences brought to bear upon the public feeling and upon the Legislature, that none could point to the result as arising from their individual efforts; and the lesson was afresh sealed on the Christian mind, that the Lord ruleth amongst the children of men. We commend the moral and religious condition of these our long-injured fellow-subjects to the continued interest of our members. 1834.

6. This Meeting thinks it right to record its thankfulness to Almighty God, in that it has pleased Him to crown with success the efforts made for the extinction of the last remnant of slavery, by the termination of the system of negro apprenticeship in the British colonies. 1839.

7. The subjects of the slave-trade and of slavery have, with much religious weight, formed a part of the deliberations of this Meeting, during which the testimony of our religious Society in regard to them has been afresh set forth in an address which we have thought it right to issue at this time. It is our prayer that it may please the Lord, who alone can do it,

And of negro
apprentice-
ship.

Testimony
against
foreign slave-
trade and
slavery.

effectually to reach the hearts of all involved in these abominations, bringing them into fear before Him, and causing the bonds of iniquity to be broken, and righteousness to flow down as a mighty stream. May it consist with His will to hasten this day. 1849.

8. The subject is so vast, and of such manifold atrocity, that we think that even the history of the whole world does not furnish a parallel to its crime. We deem it scarcely possible for a man of the most comprehensive mind fully to possess himself of the extent of the evil. The Lord alone doth know, none but the Infinite Mind can comprehend, the individual and the aggregate sufferings of those subjected to these enormities. God alone can reach the heart and awaken the conscience. It is our strong desire—we speak with reverence and fear—it is our prayer, that He may bring every one to a sense of his own share in the guilt, and that, ceasing from his iniquity, the condemnation resting upon the man-stealer and upon those who trade in the persons of men may no longer attach itself to any one bearing the name of a Christian; and that the slaveholder, whether he be more or less involved in the sin of oppression, may be brought to act in obedience to the law of impartial and uncompromising equity, and, without hesitation and without delay, restore to immediate and unconditional freedom every slave that he holds in bondage. 1849.*

* The address from which the foregoing is an extract was presented by a deputation from the Yearly Meeting to the various governments in Europe, in the course of the years 1849–53. A deputation of four Friends, of whom the late Wm. Forster was one, proceeded to the United States in the summer of 1853, and presented the address to many of the state governors; in the course of which visit Wm. Forster died in East Tennessee, on the 27th of the 1st month, 1854. The address, with the reports on its presentation, are printed in a little volume of "Addresses and Papers illustrative of Christian Principle or Testimony, issued by or on behalf of the Yearly Meeting." London, 1863.

9. For several years past we have had to deplore the existence of a sanguinary conflict in the United States. Opposed, as we are, on Christian grounds, both to war and slavery, it is with feelings of heartfelt thankfulness that we contemplate the end, as we trust, of this fearful struggle. It has pleased the Lord to stay the whirlwind, and, in His overruling providence, to bring forth the oppressed from the house of bondage. We have long sympathized with our dear brethren in America in their testimony against slavery; and have deeply felt for them in the sufferings and difficulties to which they have been of late exposed, in connection with the faithful maintenance of our testimony against all war. We desire to assure them of our warm interest and sympathy in their efforts, in co-operation with many of their fellow-citizens, on behalf of the freedmen, whose position must probably, for some years to come, present many claims on the patient, wise, and liberal care of the Christian community. 1865.

Thankfulness
for abolition
of slavery in
the United
States.

10. A deep concern was laid upon the minds of Friends of a past generation for the abolition of the slave-trade and slavery. In that cause they laboured faithfully, and in the end with much success. These great evils still prevail on a scale of fearful magnitude. The slave-trade on the east of Africa appears to be as extensive and as atrocious as that which formerly existed on the west coast; and slavery, with its cruelty and immorality, is yet maintained, both in Mohammedan and in some professedly Christian countries. We desire that the interest of Friends in the cause of the helpless and oppressed may be maintained, and that they may still labour and pray for the removal of these great iniquities. 1875.

Efforts still
necessary for
its abolition
throughout
the world.

CHAPTER X.

(Continued.)

CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY.

SECTION VII.—BURIALS AND MOURNING HABITS.

1. ADVISED against imitating the vain custom of wearing
Against mourning apparel. or giving mourning, and all extravagant expenses about the interment of the dead. 1724.

2. It is advised that women Friends should not be induced,
Women Friends encouraged to be present at funerals. by the desire to imitate prevailing customs or otherwise, to refrain from attending the burial of their relations, agreeably to the practice of our worthy predecessors, and as a becoming token of respect to the deceased. 1782. 1861.

3. Our attention has been turned to the practice of
Mourning apparel discouraged. wearing mourning garments on the occasion of the decease of relatives and friends; and we feel concerned to offer an affectionate caution to our members against this obvious conformity to the vain and oppressive customs of the world. It tends to occupy the thoughts with useless and frivolous subjects, at a time when it is peculiarly important that nothing should interfere with those precious visitations of the love of God to the soul which often, in an especial manner, accompany the afflictive dispensations of the Most High

in the death of our near connexions, contriting the hard heart, and comforting the true mourner. It is, moreover, in many instances a token of a sorrow not really felt; and thus includes a departure from that strict truthfulness which, in deed as well as in word, ought ever to mark the Christian character. We are also desirous of cautioning our friends against those progressive deviations from simplicity of dress in other respects, and that gradual assimilation with the world, which we believe often render it additionally difficult for them to resist its customs in this particular. 1845.

4. This Meeting, after serious and deliberate consideration of the subject, is of the judgment that our religious Society has a sound Christian testimony to bear against the erection of monuments, as well as against all inscriptions of a eulogistic character, over the graves of their deceased friends. Nevertheless, it is of the opinion that it is no violation of such testimony to place over or beside a grave a plain stone, the inscription on which is confined to a simple record of the name, age, and date of the decease of the individual interred. The object in this instance is simply to define the position of the grave, with a view to the satisfaction of surviving relatives, and the preventing of its premature re-opening.

Against
monuments
and costly
gravestones.

Friends are therefore left at liberty to adopt the use of such stones in any of our burial grounds; it being distinctly understood that, in all cases, they are to be put down under the direction of the Monthly Meeting; so that, in each particular burial ground, such a uniformity may be preserved as may effectually guard against any distinction being made in that place between the rich and the poor. 1850. 1861. 1883.

INDEX TO VOL. I.

(SEE ALSO CONTENTS.)

f denotes following pages or paragraphs.

	PAGE	PAR.
ABSTINENCE from distilled spirits	107	3
(See TEMPERANCE.)		
ACCOUNTABILITY of man to God only in things of God	143	1
ACCUMULATION to be kept down by wise beneficence ...	127	7
ADMONITION, Private, the duty of	67	2
AFFIRMATION. (See OATHS.)		
AGRICULTURE, Sympathy with those engaged in	120	9
AMUSEMENTS, Christian self-denial in reference to	110 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
APPRENTICES. (See ASSISTANTS, MASTERS AND MISTRESSES.)		
ARBITRATION, International, recommended	156	8
(See PEACE, WAR.)		
ASSISTANTS in Business, Care for	131	5
Arrangements for their attending worship	132	6
(See MASTERS AND MISTRESSES.)		
BAPTISM, The true saving, under the Christian dispensation	25	
BEHAVIOUR, Truth and plainness in	104	2
BENEFICENCE, A wise, keeps down accumulation	127	7
BENEVOLENCE to be active	126	4
(See LIBERALITY.)		
BIBLE. (See SCRIPTURES, THE HOLY.)		
BIBLE CLASSES encouraged	50	7
BILLS, Advice against raising fictitious credit by	118	4
BOOKS, Christian self-denial in reference to	115 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
BUSINESS, Moderate views on entering	77	2
Caution against overtrading	117	1
Uprightness and integrity in	117 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>

	PAGE	PAR.
BUSINESS (<i>continued</i>)—		
Caution respecting investment	119 <i>f</i>	6 <i>f</i>
Caution against suretyships	119	5
Moderation in pursuit of	120	10
To watch for the right time to retire	121	11
Sympathy with those in struggling circumstances	121	12
Caution as to hasty entering into	122	1
Frequent inspection into state of	122	2
Counsel in reference to bankruptcy	123 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Early disclosure of difficulties	123	3
Care for young men engaged as travellers	130	4
(See DEBTS, EXPENDITURE.)		
CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, Awful responsibility of	134	6
CEREMONIES. (See RITES AND CEREMONIES.)		
CHANGE OF HEART, Call to	97	1
CHILDREN. (See YOUNG.)		
CHRIST JESUS, Belief in, as the beloved and only begotten Son of God	3	
The Propitiation for the sins of the world	4	
The Word of God become perfect Man	6	
His light	7	
His coming foretold in the Old Testament	10	
Mediator of the New Covenant	11	
George Fox respecting His cry on the Cross.....	15	
Every command to be obeyed	23	
His Headship	59	1
Subjection to	72	2
Life from, in, and for	99	2
The true Sanctuary	99	3
His government opposed to ecclesiastical assump- tion	137 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
His Kingdom not of this world	144	1
CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION pure and spiritual.....	137 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
CHRISTIAN'S LIFE an aggressive warfare.....	61	4
CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY. (See ECCLESIASTICAL ASSUMP- TION, FASTS AND REJOICINGS, LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, MOURNING APPAREL, OATHS, SLAVERY, TITHES, WAR.)		
CHURCH AND STATE, Union of.....	142	6
CIVIL GOVERNMENT, Christian life in relation to	132 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
To be obeyed where conscience is not infringed ...	132	3
CIVIL OFFICES, Cautionary advice as to taking.....	133	4

	PAGE	PAR.
COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS, Sympathy with	92	7
Young, to be cared for	130	4
COMMUNION WITH GOD	44	6
CONSISTENCY OF CONDUCT.....	100	5
CONTROVERSY, Religious, caution against	72	3
COVENANTS, NEW AND OLD, compared	24	
COVETOUSNESS, To beware of	125	1
CREDITORS, Fraudulent preference of.....	123	4
DAYS, Superstitious observance of	146	1
DEATH PUNISHMENT, Awful responsibility of	134	6
DEBTS to be punctually paid	118	3
To be paid notwithstanding legal discharge	123	1
.....	61	4
DEPORTMENT, Truth and plainness in.....	104	2
DIFFERENCES to be avoided	67	1
DILIGENCE, Motives to	60	2
DIVERSIONS. (See AMUSEMENTS.)		
DRINKING CUSTOMS, Influence of example in respect of	108	5
Individual responsibility in reference to	109	6
(See TEMPERANCE.)		
DRESS, Pride and excess in	104	3
Moderation in	126	3
(See MOURNING APPAREL.)		
DUTIES, To be performed as services to Christ	60	3
Of love	68	4
Not to be sacrificed to inclination	91	2
Towards the sick and the poor.....	127	5f
ECCLESIASTICAL ASSUMPTION opposed to Christ's government	137f	1f
True ground of testimony against	138	3
In the present day	139	4
EDUCATION. (See PARENTS, SCHOOL MASTERS AND MISTRESSES.)		
ELECTIONS, Caution in reference to disorders at	132	2
EMIGRANTS, Advice to	135	1
Their responsibility toward uncivilized neighbours	136	2
EMPLOYERS, Counsel to	130f	1f
ETERNAL JUDGMENT, Doctrine of	9	
EVIDENCE, Caution as to giving	150	4
Summary of laws in reference to.....	150	5

	PAGE	PAR.
EXPENDITURE, Undue, deprecated	106	5
EXPENSIVE HABITS impediments to the exercise of charity	126	3
FAMILIES, HEADS OF, counsel to	80 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
FAMILY, The, waiting on the Lord in	81	4
Honouring the Lord in	87	16
The cradle of the Church	88	18
FASTS AND REJOICINGS, National, testimony against...	146 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
FELLOWSHIP, Christian, blessedness of	72	1
FICTITIOUS PAPER CURRENCY, The perniciousness of ...	118	4
FIRST-DAY of the week, privileges and right occupation	102 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
FORGIVENESS, The excellence of the spirit of.....	69	7
The example and precept of Christ	71	11
(See LOVE.)		
FRUGALITY AND INDUSTRY inculcated	120	9
FUNERALS, Women encouraged to attend	164	2
Deviations from simplicity at, discouraged	164	3
(See MOURNING APPAREL.)		
FURNITURE, Simplicity and plainness in	126	3
GIFT of God, The, to be stirred up	65	3
GIFTS AND STEWARDSHIPS in the Church.....	58 <i>f</i>	
Ministry of the Gospel	58 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
General advice on faithfulness	59 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Their diversity	59	1
Extracts from G. Fox's Epistles on importance of faithfulness	64 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Their freedom of exercise	140	5
GOSPEL, The, a message of glad tidings	16	
To be preached to every creature.....	63	8
All to be diligent in preaching	64	1
GOVERNMENT. (See CIVIL GOVERNMENT.)		
GRAVESTONES, Costly, objected to	165	4
GUARDIANS for Infants to be appointed by will.....	124	2
(See MARRIAGE.)		
HEADS OF FAMILIES, Counsel to	80 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
HEART, Change of, call to	97	1
HEATHEN, Responsibility of colonists towards	186	2
HOLY SCRIPTURES. (See SCRIPTURES, THE HOLY.)		
HOLY SPIRIT, The. (See SPIRIT, THE HOLY.)		

	PAGE	PAR.
INDUSTRY AND FRUGALITY inculcated	120	9
INNS. (See PUBLIC-HOUSES.)		
INSOLVENCY. (See BUSINESS.)		
INTEREST, High rates of, deprecated	119	7
JESUS CHRIST. (See CHRIST JESUS.)		
JEWISH CEREMONIES abrogated by the Christian dispen- sation	23	
JUDGMENT, A great day of, belief in	9	
LANGUAGE, Truth and plainness in	104	2
LIBERALITY inculcated	125 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
In active benevolence.....	126	4
To the poor	127	6
Its connection with personal moderation	128	8
Christian love the true ground of.....	128	8
LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, Christian testimony on	143 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Not a licence to do wrong.....	144	2
Contributes to welfare of nations.....	145	3
LITERATURE. (See BOOKS.)		
LIGHT OF CHRIST. (See CHRIST JESUS.)		
LOVE one towards another	67 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Its paramount duty	68	4
Founded on love to Christ.....	68	5
To be sought in humility	69	6
To be striven after, and forgiveness	69	7
Grounded on love to God	70	9
In the Church	72 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
To God an instinct of the renewed nature	101	7
To Christ leaving no room for love of the world ...	102	8
,, counteracts love of money and worldly care	128	8
(See FORGIVENESS.)		
LUXURY to be avoided.....	77	4
MAGISTERIAL OFFICES, Counsel as to undertaking	134	5
MAN accountable to God only, in things of God	143	1
MARRIAGE, Counsel as to	75 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
A Divine ordinance	75	1
Cautions on entering on.....	76	2
Its influence for good or evil.....	76	2
Not to be unduly delayed by over carefulness	77	

	PAGE	PAR.
MARRIAGE (<i>continued</i>)—		
Luxury and pride to be avoided	77	4
To be with consent of parents or guardians	78	5
Too early procedure after death of previous husband or wife	78	6
Money not the first consideration	78	7
A religious act not a mere civil contract	78	8
Of first cousins	79	9
MASTERS AND MISTRESSES	180 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Accountable for care of servants	180	2
Should delight in the true happiness of servants... (See ASSISTANTS.)	180	8
MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP	31 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
General testimony	31	1
Not to forsake	32	2
To watch against an earthly spirit in	32	3
Though silent, not to be neglected	33	4
Diligent waiting in	33	5
Dependence on Christ alone in.....	33	6
Caution in judging ministry in.....	34	6
Let things of God be first in.....	34	7
Preparation of heart in	35	8
Diligent attendance of	35	9
Punctuality in attending	36	10
Arrangements for the young to attend	36	11
Encouragement to attend one's own	36	12
Right attitude of soul in	37	13
Pure worship under the Gospel in	37	14
Spiritual offerings in	38	15
Expectant faith in and danger of self-imposed silence in	38	16
Mid-week and small to be attended.....	39	17 <i>f</i>
Living and united worship in	40	19
Servants and apprentices to be encouraged to attend	182	6
(See RITES AND CEREMONIES.)		
MESSIAH, The, coming foretold and fulfilled	11	
MINISTERS, Counsel to	55	3
To be diligent in visiting meetings	55	4
Not publicly to judge or contradict each other.....	55	5
To keep to sound words.....	56	6
Young, to be watched over and advised.....	56	7
Not to move in their own will	56	8
To avoid censorious judgments	56	9

	PAGE	PAR.
MINISTERS (<i>continued</i>)—		
To duly arrange outward affairs	57	10
Short or simple offerings of, not to be despised ...	57	11
Sympathy for, encouraged	57	12
To study soundness clearness and brevity	57	13
Need for watchfulness and humility	58	14
Not to hide their talent	64	2
To stir up the gift and awake to righteousness.....	65	3
MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL, The	53 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Its freeness	22	
Appointed by and dependent on Christ alone	53	1
True qualification for	54	2
MISSION WORK, Need of spiritual wisdom in	63	7
MISSION WORKERS, Encouragement to	62	6
MODERATION	104 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
In pursuit of business.....	120	10
In dress and other personal expenditure	126	3
(See BUSINESS, DRESS.)		
MONEY, The love of, to be counteracted by love of Christ and by Christian bountifulness	129 <i>f</i>	8 <i>f</i>
MOTHER, The Christian, importance of her influence ...	85	14
MOURNING APPAREL advised against	164	1 <i>f</i>
(See DRESS, FUNERALS.)		
MUNICIPAL OFFICES, Cautionary advice in reference to	133	4
MUSIC. (See AMUSEMENTS.)		
NATIONAL FASTS AND REJOICINGS	146 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
NEGRO APPRENTICESHIP, Abolition of	161	6
(See SLAVERY.)		
OATHS, Christian testimony against	148 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Affirmation accepted by legislature in lieu of	148 <i>f</i>	2 <i>f</i>
Summary of laws in reference to.....	150	5
OFFENCE, Occasions of, to be avoided	67	1
Private conference to be preferred in case of	67	2
PARENTS and Heads of Families, Counsel to	80 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
To pray with and for their families.....	5	
To be faithful to their charge	80	1
To neglect no opportunity of instructing children	80	2
To seek heavenly rather than earthly riches.....	80	3
To wait on God in the family circle	81	4

	PAGE	PAR.
PARENTS and Heads of Families (<i>continued</i>)—		
To guard against pernicious reading and conversation	81	5
To inculcate fear of God and knowledge of Scripture	81	6
To train in the habit of attending religious meetings	82	7
Early to instruct in Holy Scripture	82	8
Fathers and mothers to labour together.....	83	9
Firmness needful and is endearing	83	10
To cherish a tender conscience in children	84	11
To lead children to Jesus	84	13
To guard against self-indulgent habits	85	13
To impress fear and love of God on children	85	13
Responsible for their children's training	86	15
To honour the Lord in the family	87	16
Their influence and responsibility	87	17
The family the cradle of the Church	88	18
(See YOUNG.)		
PEACE, Faithfulness to principles of	154	8
Its transcendent excellency	155	7
(See ARBITRATION, WAR.)		
PEACEMAKER, The blessed office of	70	8
PECUNIARY DIFFICULTIES, Advice to those in.....	122f	1f
Should lead to reduced expenditure	124	2
(See BUSINESS.)		
PHILANTHROPIC UNDERTAKINGS, Caution in reference to	111	4
PLAINNESS AND MODERATION inculcated	104f	2f
POOR, The, to be considered.....	127	6
PRAYER with and for our families an incumbent duty	5	
And praise	45	7
Continuance in	45	8
The heart to be opened to the spirit of	46	9
(See PRIVATE RETIREMENT.)		
PRIDE AND EXCESS IN APPAREL testified against	104	8
PRINCE OF PEACE, Faithfulness to the government of the	154	8
PRIVATE RETIREMENT and Prayer	42f	1f
Waiting on the Lord in	42	1
Family worship	42	2
Privilege of	43	3
The duty of all.....	43	4
To be frequent in	44	5
Communion with God	44	6
Private and family	44	6
PUBLICATIONS. (See BOOKS.)		
PUBLIC-HOUSES, Caution against frequenting	107	2

	PAGE	PAR.
PUBLIC WORSHIP. (See MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.)		
PUNCTUALITY in paying just debts necessary.....	118	3
READING. (See BOOKS.)		
RECONCILIATION to be first sought by private conference	67	2
RECREATION needful to be taken	111	4
(See AMUSEMENTS.)		
REFORMATION not permanent independent of Christian redemption	116	4
REPORTS to disadvantage of others not to be repeated...	67	3
RESENTMENT incompatible with perfect love.....	69	7
REST, The true	101	6
Needed even by the Christian worker.....	103	2
RESURRECTION of the dead, Belief in the	8	
RETIREMENT OF MIND. (See PRIVATE RETIREMENT.)		
RICH, Danger of making haste to be	119	6
RICHES, Deceitfulness of	126	2
(See BUSINESS, COVETOUSNESS.)		
RITES AND CEREMONIES, Worship does not consist in...	21	
Of the Jewish law fulfilled by the death of Christ	23	
On saving baptism and the true spiritual supper of the Lord	24	
The Christian religion not typical but spiritual ...	25	
SCHOOL MASTERS AND MISTRESSES, Sympathy with.....	84	12
SCRIPTURES, THE HOLY	47f	1f
Friends' belief respecting	5	
To be diligently searched	47	1
Reverent esteem for and instruction in	47	2
To be frequently read.....	48	3
Family instruction in, to be promoted by Monthly and Quarterly Meetings.....	48	4
To be read in a devotional spirit	49	5
Prayer for Divine teaching of	49	6
Bible Classes encouraged	50	7
To be devoutly studied	51	8
Caution against unbelief respecting	51	9
The Inspirer of, their true Interpreter	52	10
To be devotionally read by the young daily	91	3
SELF-DENIAL, CHRISTIAN :—		
In relation to simplicity and moderation	104f	1f

	PAGE	PAR.
SELF-DENIAL, CHRISTIAN (<i>continued</i>)—		
In relation to intoxicating beverages	107 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
,, amusements and recreations	110 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
,, books and reading	115 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
SERVANTS, Religious interest on behalf of	130	1
Arrangements for their attending public worship...	132	6
(See MASTERS.)		
SICK, Duty of visiting the	127	5
SILENCE. (See PRIVATE RETIREMENT, MEETINGS.)		
SIMPLE HABITS of living inculcated.....	76	2
SIMPLICITY AND MODERATION.....	104 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
SINGULARITY not affected by early Friends	106	6
SLAVERY and the Slave Trade, Christian testimony on	159 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Abolition in British dominions, thankfulness for ...	160	4 <i>f</i>
Foreign, testimony against	161	7
Their atrocity and guilt.....	162	8
Abolition in United States, thankfulness for.....	163	9
,, elsewhere, efforts needful to obtain	163	10
SPEECH, Plainness of	104	2
SPIRIT, THE HOLY, His distinguishing work	19	
SPIRITUAL GIFTS. (See GIFTS.)		
STEWARDSHIPS in the Church, Faithfulness in	59 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i> .
Motives to diligence in	60	2
Hindrances to	60	3
Whole-hearted dedication in fulfilling	61	4
SUPPER OF THE LORD, The true spiritual	25	
SURETYSHIPS, Caution against	119	5
SUSCEPTIBILITY, Religious, importance of	106	6
SWEARING. (See OATHS.)		
TEACHERS, Sympathy with.....	84	12
TEMPERANCE inculcated	107 <i>f</i>	1 <i>f</i>
Workers encouraged	108	4
Christian self-denial the ground of	108	5
(See DRINKING CUSTOMS.)		
TESTIMONIES. (See CHRISTIAN TESTIMONIES.)		
THEATRE. (See AMUSEMENTS.)		
TITHES, Testimony against	137 <i>f</i>	2 <i>f</i>
TITHES COMMUTATION ACT, Judgment as to.....	140	6
THOUGHTS, Hard, of others not to be indulged.....	71	10
TRADE. (See BUSINESS.)		
TRAVEL, Caution respecting	112	6
TRAVELLERS. (See COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS.)		

INDEX.

177

	PAGE	PAR.
TRUTH AND SIMPLICITY in language habit and behaviour	104	2
UNITY. (See LOVE.)		
VISITS to the sick encouraged	127	5
WAITING ON THE LORD. (See FAMILY, MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.)		
WALK WITH GOD, a manifestation of Christian Life ...	97f	1f
WAR, Christian testimony on	153f	1f
Incompatible with precepts of Christ.....	153	1
Christian precept in relation to, not impracticable	153	2
Encouragement to faithfulness in reference to.....	154	3
Militia, against hiring substitutes in the	154	4
Loans in aid of, deprecated	155	5
Ships of.....	155	5
Caution against conveying soldiers	155	6
Not to place dependence on armies or fleets.....	156	7
Spirit of, great promoter of war	156	9
Rifle Clubs advised against	157	9
Volunteer corps advised against	157	9
Impossible to be waged on Christian principles ...	157	10
Military centres protested against	157	10
Christian testimony against, no cause for shame...	158	11
(See ARBITRATION, PEACE.)		
WEALTH. (See RICHES.)		
WILLS, Advice regarding	124	1f
To be made when in health and sound judgment...	124	1
Guardians to be appointed for Infants	124	2
Elaborate provisions for remote contingencies to be avoided	125	3
WOMAN, The Christian, importance of her influence.....	85	14
WOMEN encouraged to be present at funerals	164	2
WORD OF GOD, The, the true Light	7	
WORLD, The spirit of, testimony against	100	4
The, love of, excluded by love to Christ	{ 102	8
	{ 128	8
Danger of yielding to	104	1
The heaven of, danger of.....	120	8
WORLDLINESS a hindrance to faithfulness	60	3
Indications of prevalent spirit of.....	114	9

	PAGE	PAGE.
WORLDLY CARE counteracted by love to Christ	128	8
WORLDLY ENTANGLEMENTS, Danger of	120	10
WORSHIP. (See MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.)		
YOUNG, The, to cherish a tender conscience.....	84	11
To give themselves to the Lord	90	1
Not to sacrifice duty to inclination	91	2
To read Scripture devotionally.....	91	3
To be possessors not professors only of Truth ...	91	4
To counsel others in early life	92	5
To respect the aged	92	6
Sympathy with, in their temptations	93	8
In large towns to be specially cared for	93	8
No victory without conflict	94	9
Blessedness of Christ's training and teaching ...	95	10
Bought with a price.....	95	11
As travellers to be cared for	130	4
(See GUARDIANS, PARENTS.)		

10

11

12

13

14

15

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